
J E M I M A.

A NOVEL.

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A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

ZORIADA, OR VILLAGE ANNALS, &c.

VOL. II.

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J E M I M A.

CHAPTER I.

A STARTLING INCIDENT.

THE Major's children sat in an adjoining apartment to his chamber from morning to night, and some one of them, relieved at certain hours by Mrs. Wellon, from night till morning, though without his knowledge, consequently without his suspicion of their great fatigue.

WHAT will become of me, said Rosina, my father will fend for me if I lose my only friend, and I suppose shut me up in a

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nunnery for life, to avoid the disgrace my rustic education would bring upon him; and I shall never, never see either Davison, Jemima, or Mrs. Wellon more.

MRS. WELLON, concluding the hand of dissolution was upon her beloved master, execrated Levet in the most outrageous terms, for, to his villainy, she insisted upon it, he owed his illness.

AND will your loss, Rosina, or your's, Mrs. Wellon, said Davison, exceed the loss Jemima and I shall sustain? has Major Jones not been to us a parent, a guardian, and a benefactor; but let us not increase each other's distress by anticipating an event, the very idea of which tears our nerves to pieces, but wait and see what Providence will do for us.

IN one of these moments of concealed anguish and resigned grief, a gentleman arrived post, and begged to be admitted.

I AM

I AM come, said the gentleman, to Mr. Davison, from Lord Paisley, to put his Lordship's seal, with the seal of the Major's house-keeper, to his cabinet of papers and other valuable effects, until time may shew unto whom they belong.

ARE you then come to bury him alive? cried Mrs. Wellon; for, so long as my dear and honoured master lives, no seals but by his own commands shall be affixed to his property.

I WAS apprised, replied the gentleman, of the honourable and obliging persons I should have to deal with; but my orders shall not be trifled with, I will call in the assistance of a magistrate, if necessary, to enforce their execution.

AND did my father, said Rosina, bid you act thus by my generous, my noble-minded uncle?

So then, young Lady, replied the stranger, you are the daughter of my client; I hope you will therefore, as such, separate yourself from the interested part of his family, and espouse Lord Paisley's cause with all your powers.

HAVE you, Sir, heard of my dear mother's death? demanded Rosina, if you have —

THAT, replied the gentleman, is foreign to the point in question. Have I, Madam, to Mrs. Wellon, for I suppose you are the Major's house-keeper, notwithstanding I find you in this good company, or have I not, arrived before your master's decease?

My master, said Mrs. Wellon, tears accompanying the words, is, I fear, dangerously ill, but death may yet be far distant; I have neither the power nor the wish to prevent your watching with us in this apartment, but

but I hope you cannot mean to enter the next.

My commission, replied the gentleman, extends to a fight of the Major's person, living or dead, and it shall be religiously fulfilled.

BLESSED heaven, cried Rosina, who shall dare to disturb him?

BE patient, said Davison, he will awake presently, and then this gentleman shall judge both for us and himself; you shall go in with Mrs. Wellon, Sir, so soon as he awakes.

Poor Mrs. Wellon was for stepping to the bed side to see how her master breathed.

FAIR and softly, said the gentleman, you shall not steal a march upon me, if the Major is able himself to forbid me his chamber I must retire, but pardon me if I say,

no other person's bidding shall exclude me from it, until Lord Paisley arrives.

Is he then coming, cried Rosina? wildly.

AGAIN Mr. Davison read a lecture upon patience and resignation, and they were all of them for some moments silent.

At length the Major awaking, greatly relieved and refreshed, called out, Davison! Mrs. Wellon, said Davison, this gentleman has chose you for his conductress, and I will for the first time in my life let Major Jones call me unanswered.

MRS. WELLON, with the stranger at her heels, advanced to the bed side.—Who, said the Major, have you got there? Wellon.

A GENTLEMAN, replied she, who is come from Lord Paisley to enquire after your health, and refused to depart without seeing, with

with his own eyes, whether you was alive or dead.

THE Major actually laughed; tender fraternal care, cried he; so pray let the gentleman approach, and be feated. Sir, perhaps when you hear it with your own ears, and from Major Jones' own lips, that he lives to thank him for his tender and fraternal attention, his Lordship will believe you. Wellon, order the gentleman a dish of chocolate: and where is my Davison.

IN the next room, as usual, Sir, said Mrs. Wellon; but being forbid by this great gentleman to come in, he waits for your commands so to do.

HOLLA, Davison! cried the Major, not till I am dead shall any one be master here but myself; how came you, my boy, to be such a poltron as to submit—

My respect for your repose, Sir, and my

tenderness for your feelings.—You was right, you was good, said the Major; and now, Sir, give me leave to ask you what further business you have with me or mine.

I CONFESS, Sir, replied the gentleman, there has been a mistake in this affair. You have undoubtedly a right to decide for yourself; and I have only to retire, and beg your pardon for my intrusion.

ARE you an honest man, said the Major; dare you be independent, or are you one of my brother's creatures?

I AM, Sir, replied the stranger in much apparent confusion, a gentleman, though a professional man, and incapable I hope, unless under the influence of error, of ill or unhandsome behaviour to any one.

THEN, Sir, said the Major, (and I like your countenance) do me the favour to make my house your home, until my perfect

fect recovery, which I feel is not far distant, unless a relapse should take place. But I know not how it is, continued he, your embassy, instead of offending, has entertained me; and I therefore think you will not have the sin of hurrying me out of the world to answer for, which might have been the case if you had come acrose me in one of my inflammable humours. Jemima, my dear, let me present you to this gentleman: my daughter-in-law, Sir, the wife of Mr. Davison, who is also my son-in-law; the manly, the spirited young fellow, whose respect and kindness for me rendered him so tame on your first arrival: and my Rosina, Sir, continued the Major, the deserted child of Lord Paisley, and my beloved niece: and thus, Sir, do you find me in the bosom of domestic happiness. My brother, I thank him, wishes to have me earthed, but my mind tells me I shall live to see my children's children, and peace upon Israel. If, therefore, resumed the Major, you can take such a family, as you behold us, by the

hand, renounce your prejudices, and mix with us in friendship; I promise you, you shall not have reason to mark this down for the most unprofitable day of your life.

THE gentleman professed his concern for the part he had been drawn in to act, and his amicable inclinations in future: and having finished his dish of chocolate, and convinced himself the Major was sincere in his invitation of him to his house, he sent to the inn for his cloakbag, and, with much cordiality and satisfaction, set up his rest at Bath under the Major's roof.

YOU will please to favour us with your name, Sir, said Mr. Davison, unless you wish we shall consider as a stranger, the gentleman so recently naturalized into our family.

DENHAM, at your service, Sir. Denham! repeated Davison; Denham of Somersetshire? Surely, Sir, you are not the father of young Denham of Queen's—

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THE same, replied the gentleman, with surprise and joy; and I now recollect my son's estimable, his affectionate mention of you. At this rate we shall be friends indeed, and all that is passed must be buried in oblivion.

IT is done already, cried Davison; the father of Edward Denham can alone inspire me with sentiments of respect.

MRS. WELLON was enraptured at this happy termination of what, to her feelings, appeared a dangerous and a cruel business; and the evening was spent in mutual congratulations.

CHAPTER II.

A PARTING.

A FLYING courier arrived the next morning, to inform Mr. Denham that Lord Paisley was collecting materials to build an application for a statute of lunacy upon, in case of his brother's prolonged indisposition, or his decease, for the better securing his large possessions; and conjuring him to be not only vigilant, but invulnerable to all the wiles that would be laid for poisoning his mind, and warping his judgment: that he would clear the house with all convenient speed of its incestuous inhabitants; and let his brother quietly depart in the arms of simple fornication, the arms of his old and well-beloved housekeeper, provided she was not deaf to the voice of reason and her own interest, and conducted herself with submission, discretion, &c. &c.

MR.

MR. DENHAM was all indignation at these proceedings, and wrote a checking and rebuking account, of all he had seen and heard; complaining loudly, at the same time, of the deception which had been practised towards him, and finally renouncing every further concern in the business.

BUT before the courier could be sent off, a second arrived, in a more gentleman-like style, with a commission that every one's fears had anticipated, and which of all others, every ones heart was least disposed to fulfil; for, by the advice of his head counsellor, Levet, who on the Major's illness, was openly entertained in Lord Paisley's service, he was commissioned to bring his Lordship's daughter home, to be disposed of at his pleasure.

ROSINA declared she would resist this command to the last moment of her life; and, grasping the Major's hand in hers, bade

bade the savage bearer, as she called him, of such evil tidings, part them if he could.

THE Major however told her he had no power over his brother's child; but that his doors and arms should always be open to receive her, of she could obtain leave to come back.

ROSINA's soul revolted at the idea of filial duty to a man who had destroyed her mother's fame and life, and only claimed her for his child to render her miserable. She lamented the day she left the cottage on the heath side; and the next moment, kissing Mrs. Davison's hands, renounced her lamentation of that incident; but she at length took it in her head to reproach Davison for not acting the part of a brother, and protecting her from her enemies. O! cried she, in an agony of tears, what I once thought you! the first, the bravest, the best of men; and now I live to see you stand by,

by, and calmly behold my everlasting destruction.

CRUEL, unjust, Rosina, said Davison, greatly affected by her manner and expressions, is there any thing in my power to be done!—I would oppose every man but your own father; him I must not oppose. Major Jones himself holds the paternal a sacred tie, and I will never dare to go a step beyond his example on any occasion.

DOES my mother live!—my dear, my gentle, my betrayed and helpless mother, Mr. Davison, does she live!—How then can you ask me to be dutiful to—She looked at the Major and forebore to finish the sentence.

THE messenger urged her to depart, told her the chaise was at the door, and that he would attend her upon horseback, if that was more agreeable to her than permitting him

him otherwise to accompany her. O yes, yes, cried she, any thing but the company of so unfeeling a man will be relieving to me. Dearest Sir, (to Major Jones); Jemima, my sister, friend; Mr. Davison; shall I never see you more!

SHE wept audibly as she passed through the rooms, and waved her handkerchief at all the servants; then throwing herself into the corner of the carriage, put it up to her eyes, and was drove off.

THE Major, the moment she was gone, reproached himself with pusillanimity in giving her up to such a wretch as Leyet. Yet, to have withheld her from a father, would have been a troublesome business; the laws and the general suffrage, being on the side of paternity. I must therefore, said he, endeavour to comfort myself with the hope, that her knowledge of both those unworthy men's characters, will put her at all times upon her guard; and that Providence

dence will not forsake the helpless and the innocent. I now wish, continued the Major, I had not been so hasty in depriving Rosina of her amiable governante; but she had put it in my head to seek for, and to find so many perfections in her, that I, on discovering her engagement to another, and that the Welch living was not only vacant, but that the estate wanted some superintendence, I was glad to wash my hands of her, before it was in her power to carry away any part of my peace of mind, or render me a whining puppy, on the verge of old age: and let all well-meaning men be advised, and do likewise, when in any kind of similar situation.

How wicked, Wellon, said the Major, on retiring for the evening, how wicked we are to doubt (though but for a moment) the benign and preserving power of him that made us. On the heath side this lovely flower, our Rosina, bloomed like the Rose in the desert, secure from danger; but let us

us not also fail to remember, that when transplanted into the critical soil of observation and exposure, and that too, in the baneful climate of Levet's actual and personal residence, her heart resisted every pernicious sentiment, and her conduct was sweetly correct. She avoided the villain as she would a serpent; and even before her suspicions were excited by his detected disguise, and probable deep designings, she compared his manners with what she had heard related and seen of the only bad man within her knowledge, and estimated him accordingly.

MR. DENHAM told the Major his son was a great favourite at Lord Paisley's, not for his levity or high breeding, but for a cheerful turn of temper, and a fine tenor voice, which renders him at all times an acceptable visitant. Now, the sins of the father, continued he, will not, I dare believe, be so far visited on his child, as to disqualify him from enjoying his usual access

cess to his Lordship; I will therefore, if you wish it, write him a few hints of the young lady's merits and fears; and instruct him to render her every possible service.

This offer was thankfully accepted by Mr. Davison; but before the post had done its office, Edward Denham had voluntarily devoted himself, his head, his heart, to the fair and amiable Rosina, in consequence of the following circumstance.

His Lordship was counting the hours for the return of his messenger; but, in his eagerness to hear himself announced lord of his brother's well-lined coffers, his tyrannical schemes respecting his innocent and helpless child, were wholly forgotten by him. When, therefore, the chaise was perceived in the avenue, now, cried his Lordship to his surrounding friends, what will you give me for my chance — Dead, or not dead! are the odds against me?

EDWARD

EDWARD DENHAM went to the window amongst the other spectators, and soon discovered Rosina, who was breathing upon her handkerchief, and applying it to her eyes, with the utmost assiduity, in order to abate their redness; she having shed tears the greatest part of the way.

DEAD for a dachet, cried this unnatural brother; the girl is blubbering, and I must endeavour to call up a decent cast of features to receive her. Fly then, Denham, said his Lordship, and assist her to alight; and, in performing the part of her gentleman usher to this apartment, contrive to delay as long as possible, that the traces of risibility may be duly regulated.

EDWARD DENHAM presented himself at the door of the chaise, and begged permission to conduct the young Lady to her father. My father! repeated Rosina, alas! alas! my father.

HE is prepared for the worst news you can bring him Madam, said Denham, touched no less by her beauty than her apparent sorrow, but as Major Jones was past the meridian of life, I hope you will the sooner reconcile yourself to his loss, than if he had been cut off at an earlier age.

O! I HAVE indeed lost him, cried Rosina, pressing her hands together, lost his friendship, his kindness, his most indulgent countenance—Lost them, Sir, for ever.

AWAY flew Lord Paisley's *real* valet to his master with this confirmation of the general opinion in the drawing room, and received five guineas reward. Harkee, said his gay Lordship to his gay friends, there will be no-standing this girl's grief in its first violence; so, suppose we retire and congratulate ourselves upon our good fortune. Hah Levet! (for the pious Mr. Levet was of the party) until Edward Denham has talked

her

her, which I doubt not he will endeavour to do, into resignation and composure!

ACCORDINGLY, when they entered the drawing room, to the great surprise of Denham, the company were all fled. He sent to let his Lordship know there were letters for him from his father, and received, for answer to his message, orders to peruse them himself, and to do whatever their contents required should be immediately done; for that his Lordship was suddenly indisposed, and could not attend business.

EDWARD DENHAM was an elegant young man both in manners and person, though so modestly mentioned by his father, and possessed an excellent heart; and though his father did not intend him for the bar, he frequently acted as his agent in law matters: his Lordship therefore, to gain a few hours convivialty, thus vested him with full powers to act on this occasion of his imagined succession to immense wealth.

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THE first object of Denham's attention was, however, the refreshment and accommodation of the young Lady, whom he prevailed upon to own a dish of tea would be very agreeable; and Rosina finding herself infinitely relieved by this unhoped-for respite, her delayed introduction brightened up, and became in some measure sensible of her new friend's merits; for, that he *was* a friend, and deeply, though instantaneously interested in her happiness, was as evident as the noon day sun; and her heart thanked him, but her lips were silent.

WHEN the tea was brought in, he begged permission to open his father's letters to Lord Paisley. To paint his astonishment at the contents, however, is not in the power of language; the Major alive, and his father self-discharged from his connections with Lord Paisley as a client! He looked at the young Lady, and then at the letter, until, from a combination of ideas, in the number of which his being deprived of the pleasure

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sure of seeing her again had no inconsiderable share, the paper dropped from his hands upon the ground, and he smote his forehead in despair and disconsolation.

His eyes were now perpetually turning from Rosina to the door, and from the door to Rosina, dreading the demand of those despatches that must banish him from the Hall and her presence for ever. My Lord's valet did at length appear in his stead, and telling Denham his Lordship was gone to bed, and could not see him or his daughter till morning, was popping out again to join the revelry below, but recollecting himself, he added, it was Lord Paisley's request that Mr. Denham would entertain the young Lady for that evening, and he would consider himself much his debtor.

THE fellow, as per orders, reported what he had seen; the young Lady appeared, he said, to have been weeping much, but ap-peared

peared also to be coming about in the way of composure.

Yes yes, said his Lordship, a lady's tears, like the tide, will ebb and flow. I nevertheless fear she will not have so sufficiently exhausted them as to spare me a shower I could dispense with being witness to on this occasion.

He then, having ordered a fresh supply of claret, burgundy, and champaign, and guarded himself at all points, he said, against detection and interruption, proceeded to make his friends happy, with a munificence that was applauded to the skies.

In the first place, Levet, said his Lordship, I give you the living of Davison, (no matter who is the present incumbent) and constitute the Hall your parsonage house; on this condition, that you always keep it prepared for the reception of me and my train, (and frequent, my mind tells

me, will be my visits there) for we will make it our unbending seat, when disposed to be peculiarly joyous. To you, Pilington, (a second Levet, and one of his Lordship's very commode humble servants) I give the Welch living, with *non-residence*, take notice, for I shall want your company. And to you, Blackwell, (a third equally amiable clerical character with the two preceding) the Surry rectory, for services received.

AND Denham must be handsomely remembered. Denham shall therefore, resumed his Lordship after passing an enlivening toast, be appointed the agent and superintendent of all my rents and comings in. My daughter shall be sent to France till she is one and twenty, that I may not blush at her bringing out in the fashionable world.

IN a word, I will reward merit wherever I find it.

MOREOVER,

MOREOVER, continued he, for the advancement of the family honours, I will obtain leave to bear the title and dignity of a Marquis; and then, you dormir, slapping a young fellow on the shoulder that was sunk into a profound reverie, having cancelled your mortgage, and put a thousand pounds in your pocket to set you afloat, we will each of us seek for some kind soft fair one to lull us to our desired repose. And how we shall revere the memory of old Square Toes whilst we are thus enjoying the fruits of his ancestors' plebeian toil, his dirty, mean, plodding ancestors. By Heavens! exclaimed he, we shall revere it as we ought; and Levet, mark down the day and hour of our good fortune, that the anniversary may not fail of due celebrity.

THE whole company was in tip top spirits: nor were the stewart's room and the kitchen (though under suitable caution) without their participation. But the messenger who brought the young lady, having

taken the chaise, the instant she quitted it, fifteen miles beyond his Lordship's seat, on some particular business, without exchanging a word with any one, they were all, from the highest to the lowest, in one general state of misapprehension and deception.

CHAPTER III.

A VERY TENDER SCENE.

EDWARD DENHAM, on the young Lady's finishing her tea, during which they had been profoundly silent, rang for the things to be removed, lest any officious act of duty should bring the servants within hearing of even one casual word, relative to the important subject he was under the disagreeable necessity of entering upon.

ARE you, Madam, said he, so soon as all was tranquil, acquainted with the contents of my father's letter?

NOT precisely, replied Rosina; but I know the gentleman was much displeased with Lord Paisley, and I conclude he wrote to tell him as much.

HE has wrote, cried Edward, to tell him such things as must for ever exclude me from visiting this mansion. Distressing, unfortunate conduct. Was there no possibility of drawing the line! no mode of temporising, that might have left it in my power to be useful to you, Madam? I always understood, continued Edward, it was a justifiable act of self-preservation, to repel fraud by fraud; justifiable both by the laws of God and man. Surely then, my father's proceedings are wrong, and this irritable measure a destructive one.

ROSINA, without once considering the impropriety, lamented all she felt of her share in this deranging incident; and tho' her heart would approve of Mr. Denham's honest indignation, her self-apprehension was in alarm at his conduct. I shall, said she, from the genuine dictates of her sentiments, I shall be miserable if I am never to see you more. O! good Sir, can you not devise some means of saving me from so great

great a misfortune as the loss of your friendship?

My friendship, replied the gallant youth, on an acquaintance only *two hours old*, my friendship, Madam, no one *can* deprive you of; but I dare not deceive Lord Paifley, or disobey my father: and this, therefore, how shall I speak it! this, I fear, will be the last time I shall ever have the happiness of conversing with you.

I CANNOT bear the idea, said the artless Rosina, the killing idea. Ah! Sir, such friends have I left behind! Major Jones, one of the worthiest of men: Mr. Davison Jones! —

DAVISON JONES, Madam! said Edward Denham; is it possible! We were inseparable at the university. I know your uncle's character, and am sensible of all his excellencies; and beyond measure does this discovery aggravate the evil. Major Jones'

niece! O wherefore, my father, wherefore have you so rashly and cruelly deprived me of the pleasure, the delight of serving her!

ROSINA's tears could no longer be restrained; and, although *unrufed to the melting mood*, Edward Denham was on the point of shedding tears also. He looked unutterable things; but still the calamity appeared to him without possibility of mitigation. Hear my story, Sir, said Rosina, it will teach you to pity me, if it suggest not to you some method of saving me.

SHE then, with all the powers of nature and winning simplicity, told him what she knew of herself, and concluded with asking him, if she could either love or honour such a man as Lord Paisley, or think herself safe under the same roof with such a man as Levet. Can you therefore, added she, with streaming eyes and uplifted hands, can *you*, Sir, have the heart to forgive

sake me? I am certain I would not forsake you in the same situation.

WHOEVER has been young, and felt the power of enchantment, (for the fact is, that enchantment is only another name for love) may suppose how this behaviour in a beautiful girl of seventeen would operate upon the ardent feelings of a young fellow barely three and twenty, whose affections were unengaged, and whose morals were uncontaminated. Notwithstanding his frequent visits at Lord Paisley's, a decency and decorum was observed before him by the whole set, not out of tenderness to his youth, but from the firmness of his principles, which left them no doubt of his shunning, what he without scruple avowed he disapproved, licentious conversation; and he had talents to make his company an object, and induce, even Lord Paisley himself, to wear a mask in his presence.

EDWARD DENHAM besought Rosina to

eat a bit of supper; a boiled chicken, or other trifling article. She consented, on condition that he would partake of it; and she forbade the servants waiting, their observing and curious eyes, she said, giving her much disturbance. It was set before her, and every thing conducted to her wish; after which, Mr. Davison becoming the subject, with her usual unguarded frankness she superadded her admiration of him, to the account she had given Edward of herself. He sighed, and secretly envied him such sweet approbation.

As there was nothing Rosina dreaded so much as being left alone, she disregarded all the polite hints Denham's prudence compelled him to give her, by looking on his watch, that it was time for her to retire; when, in a moment least expected, she, in her emphatic manner, exclaimed, O! Sir, that you was but a female friend! then would not the poor Rosina be left to solitude and sadness; but I see I disturb you,
(for

(for the young man was visibly affected) and will only ask you once more, if, through all the turnings of your mind, your knowledge, and your kindness, you cannot see one means of saving me.

Yes, dearest young Lady, cried Denham; it is almost inspiration! I have thought of a means. I will to-morrow morning attend his Lordship, as if I had left my father's letter at home, where I will immediately go, to give a colour to my report, though I shall return here to sleep, and will beg leave to tell him the contents, which perhaps will perfectly satisfy him.

Good, good Sir, said Rosina, and what, pray, will you tell him are the contents?

THAT your uncle, replied Denham, is living, but in a dangerous way, and that my father will not quit Bath until some essential change has taken place; and that your tears, Madam, (his voice softening at

the mention of them) flowed from the apprehension, which is indeed the truth, of never seeing the Major more.

So far, cried Rosina, is delightful, if it but succeed. But, Sir, you will not, I hope, let your kind care of me stop here.

If his Lordship receive this account as sterling, then will I fly to the person who conducted you hither, (and I happily know where to find him) and despatch him immediately, in my Lord's name, to my father, with an account of my whole proceedings, and motives for such proceedings, and we must wait his return with all possible patience and composure.

AND surely said Rosina, Heaven will reward you for thus compaffionating a poor, forlorn, helpless young woman, who has been compelled, by her destiny, to exchange happiness for wealth, and a state of fearless

fearless security, for every dread a human mind can endure.

IT would not have been in the high style of romance, if the young hero of the evening had departed without kissing the fair one's hand; to which act of gallant homage, the unpractised Rosina made not the least objection: it never occurring to her pure and artless imagination, that, as she was situated, permitting her hand to be kissed, was to sign and seal a lover's contract to all intents and purposes: and a *lover* too, the acquaintance of a few hours only.

CHAPTER IV.

A RETROSPECT, TOGETHER WITH A MA-
NŒUVRE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

How each of these young people passed the night, may much more easily be imagined than described; but true it was, their anxiety had one and the same object, though under different appearances; Edward Denham beating his brains from the time he went to bed till he arose, how best to deceive and blind Lord Paisley, and Rosina being alone tortured with the apprehensions of losing a worthy, estimable, and newly acquired friend.

IT will now, perhaps, be proper to account for Levet's introduction and abundant consequence at Lord Paisley's.

IMMEDIATELY on that pious and amiable gentleman's

gentleman's discomfiture at the toll-gate, to which Jemima's guard permitted him to arrive before he attempted her rescue, Satan, his never failing counsellor and preceptor, suggested to him that his next best step would be to cross the country and interest Lord Paisley (by a representation of the immense fortune about to slip through his fingers) in the cause of his heart; for that he loved Jemima with a true *libertine* affection was undenial, and of course every devisable method for obtaining her was important to his feelings.

LORD PAISLEY was lounging in his drawing room, when information was brought him that a clergyman, who professed to have very particular business with him, begged to be honoured with a few minutes' audience.

SOME lousy curate, was his Lordship's elegant epithet, I suppose; and this son of the

the church was commanded to approach him.

LEVET bowed, and for once in his life was abashed; but recollecting it was not a man of nice honour or troublesome principles he had to deal with in Lord Paisley, he told him in so many plain terms who he was, wherefore, and whence he came; winding up the whole with an offer of his best services.

MON DIEU, cried his Lordship, what a wretch is this brother of mine?—How much, Mr. what's your name, do you say he is worth; and by what means do you think it practicable for me to do myself justice?

MR. LEVET replied, that, to his certain knowledge the Major was master of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and that it was his firm belief his Lordship would have little more to do than to claim his relationship, and open a friendly connection between them,

them, to come in for at least three-fifths of the money.

LORD PAISLEY's avaricious and narrow soul felt a pang.—And why not push our success still farther, said he, and by defeating his diabolical intentions respecting his spurious offspring, strike a bold stroke for *all* his possessions.

LEVET said he admired his Lordship's spirit and just discernment, and that nothing on his part should be wanting to advance his Lordship's wishes; but that the campaign must open by a brotherly overture for visiting each other, when the rest would follow in the natural course of things; for time and place were the great points to be attended to.

As to dissimulation, said his Lordship, on a *proper* occasion, I think, I should not find myself deficient there; but the manners of these people must be barbarous, and their

house

house a scene of rusticity; and therefore, as my nerves, Sir, happen to be somewhat more delicately strung than the *canaille* can have a conception of, it does not appear possible I could go through the laborious task of conversing with them; and you, it seems, have insurmountable disqualifications for giving me your personal support.

UNLESS my Lord, returned Levet, some mode of disguise could be hit off to prevent discovery. One thing is, however, much in favour of any device of that kind; every creature at Davison Hall is guileless, and unsuspicious of guile, so that, could appearances be in any tolerable degree preserved, you might, my Lord, proceed both uninterrupted and rapidly in your work.

IT was settled, however, that a few days should pass before they began their attack upon the Major's credulity and benevolent temper, which days were to be spent in plans of future daring and mischievous import;

port; and Levet, apprehending that some little spur beyond avarice might be necessary, not knowing the complection of the heart he was tampering with, painted Jemima as the loveliest of her sex, and alone a prize of inestimable worth to a man of Lord Paisley's fine taste and elegant understanding.

His Lordship, revolving on his pillow what pretty things he could do with a hundred and fifty thousand pounds, besides the Davison, Welch, and Surry estates, which he knew his late uncles had bestowed upon the Major, considered Levet's offer of assistance, in his favour, &c. &c. a capital benefit. He therefore caressed him the ensuing morning in a manner that exceeded his most flattering hopes; and this pious priest, with self-congratulations he could scarcely suppress from being audible, pronounced his own fortune made.

AND what, Levet, said his Lordship, for it
is

is proper we should understand our ground in all its dimensions, what is your desired reward, should success crown our enterprise.

LEVET hesitated. Jemima, the imperious Jemima, was the object of his secret aspirations, but he was fearful his Lordship would put in a superior claim, and instead of love, that he must content himself with revenge.

LORD PAISLEY saw the conflict in his soul; and, having observed that warmth with which he had described Jemima's charms, was led to make an equally just and instantaneous interpretation of his wishes. Beauty, said he, therefore, is, Levet, a beautiful thing, and I confess your account of this girl's person has interested my softer passions; but Scipio was a general after my own heart, and the same self-denial which he practised, will I on this occasion adopt. That *unseen* Helen shall be *your's* without let or molestation, and a handsome living into

into the bargain, provided you render the wealth mine; for the golden times are past, when men could live upon love.

LEVENT was now all alacrity and animation; and, having as ardent a wish to revisit the family as his Lordship entertained for his accompaniment to Davison Hall, he proposed attending him in the quality of valet; trusting to rouge, coloured clothes, and false eye brows, for his passport with its inhabitants.

Rosina's youth, fine face, and humble station, allured him indeed a little from his direct line of pursuit. But he knew Jemima was not to be won; as also, that the mine of her destruction must be dexterously laid, and cautiously sprung; whereas, Rosina's case was quite otherwise. And moreover, the state of his mind was such as to require some dissipation and amusement; and what is so amusing to a mind like his, as leading an artless innocent astray, and triumphing

ing over virtue, that, unknowing of danger, was incapable of defence, and was too gentle to reproach him except by tears.

SYMPATHY and antipathy are wonderful sensations. Rosina's soul refused acquaintance with him; she had heard of but one bold, cruel, and unprincipled man, and, from her innocence, concluded the world could not contain a second capable of committing such enormities. The priest was therefore foiled at all points; nor could Jemima's intellectual cultivation have held, or thrown him to a greater distance, than the instinctive abhorrence of vice in this fair daughter of simplicity. In a word, his touch was odious to her feelings, his breath, contagion; and so close did she keep to Mrs. Wellington's side, when from under her young Lady's immediate eye, that Levet hourly execrated the pride and stubbornness of the sex, and formed tremendous resolutions both with respect to her and the haughty Jemima, whenever

whenever the day arrived that he had them at his mercy.

How this great enterprise terminated, has already been shewn. Levet, however, recovering himself like the arch fiend in Milton, after his defeat, that *all* might not be lost, advised his noble patron to order his daughter home; when he doubted not, but, on the character of a gentleman, his figure and address would win upon her young heart, and produce some happy effect; a matrimonial or a gallant frolic, as might be most practicable. And, having succeeded in his advised measure, nothing but the apprehension of putting Rosina upon her guard, by a premature commencement of his manœuvrings, kept him from an early exhibition of himself; at the same time, that the fear of giving Lord Paisley an unlucky item, restrained him from remonstrating upon Edward Denham's high commission of entertaining her tête à tête for so long a period; for, that simplicity could be converted

ed into vanity, and the fierceness of virtue into a regard of reputation only, was this gentleman's creed of the sex; he however flattered himself that the distress of her separation from her friends, and the confusion of finding herself received, and attended by a young fellow and a stranger, would preserve her breast from the tender partiality he was anxious it should not imbibe, and leave him the power, on some future day, to make his advantage of it.

CHAPTER V.

A SUCCESSFUL MANŒUVRE.

EDWARD DENHAM slept at Lord Paisley's, and with a beating heart waited a summons to his Lordship, on which so many hopes and fears depended; at length he received orders to present himself at Lord Paisley's bed side, who, yawning, bid him tell him the substance of his father's letter, for that, as to the minutio, he had neither leisure nor inclination to hear it.

EDWARD revived at this address, and informed his Lordship that the Major was not yet dead, but was hourly expected to die, and that therefore his father was determined not to leave Bath until all was over, and would send the earliest intelligence when a change did take place.

So then, replied his Lordship, I have been led into a very pretty and a very profitable error; five guineas, Sir, on the one hand, and the promise of appointments, on the other, I may not find myself dispos'd to fulfil; it is a cursed affair Edward, but tell your father I am much pleased and obliged by his affiduity, and only beg to hear no more of it until the old soldier is actually got into the custody of the undertaker; and so good morning to you.

DENHAM made his bow, and could have fallen on his knees, from gratitude, to heaven, but was called back and thrown into great agitation, until his Lordship, yawning a second time, said, but pray Denham how is Rosina, and have you seen her this morning?

— Denham replied in the negative; well then, said his Lordship, make it your business to see her, and tell her that I shall not be visible these three hours, and that I have enquired after her. I suppose, added he, yawning a third time, you will have the gallantry

gallantry to breakfast with her. It is my opinion, continued his Lordship, Levet should hold off at present; the girl has a keen eye and a penetrating understanding, and I have the satisfaction, Edward, to believe she is more knave than fool, though bred on a dunghill. I could prove her illegitimate, but it is not worth while; somebody must have my fortune, and in this age of amour there will be many a man to keep me in countenance, if it should even become my fate to provide for a child I have only the reputation of being father to. Edward, good morning to you; adieu.

EDWARD DENHAM, transported with love and joy, flew to the parlour, where he found not the beautiful creature he had seen the night before, the roses were faded from her cheeks with watching, and the lustre of her eye the victim of anxiety. He was struck speechless; and poor Rosina, construing his concern at beholding her so changed into a melancholy presage of the

news he brought, was reduced in her turn to a statue.

I AM come, said Denham recovering himself, by his Lordship's command, to breakfast with you, Madam, to assure you of his kind wishes for your repose and happiness, and to tell you (lowering his voice as the servant entered) that all is well.

O SIR! what joy you give me, cried Rofina, her complexion heightening into its full beauty, and her eyes animating with delight; but this short account will not satisfy me, I must intreat you to enlarge it; nothing will be too trifling a particular in such a cause for me to be made acquainted with.

DELAYS, said *her* young counsellor, Madam, are dangerous, I must instantly write and send off my letter to my father; and when that is done, where, or in what employment

employment could I be so happy as relating to you—

I HAVE caught all your sense, said Rosina, of our critical situation. O, away then, Sir, take and execute your measures, and return to me the first possible moment, for I will neither see nor talk with any one but yourself.

DENHAM was not slow in complying; and most fortunate was his conduct in that respect, for he found the messenger up, and preparing to wait upon Lord Paisley. An auspicious moment, he called it, and committing to his care the new despatches he had got ready for his father, exhorted him in Lord Paisley's name to be expeditious; and giving him to know as much as he thought necessary of the previous evening's mistake, easily convinced him it would be most prudent on his return to go into Mr. Denham's house in the first instance, where he, Edward Denham would meet him, to consult,

according to the nature of the letters he brought back, the most prepared manner of communication to his Lordship.

ROSINA had not begun breakfast, though two hours had elapsed, before Denham rejoined her; there was no eating she said until her mind was tranquil, but that she was now, she believed, able to make a good meal.

DENHAM had very judiciously requested the messenger would not in person attend at the Major's, lest, as he told him, questions might be asked he would not be altogether qualified to answer; and a happy request it was, for so ludicrously had the pen of joy, in Edward Denham's hand, painted the scene both of deception and disappointment at Lord Paisley's, that peals of laughter from the Major and his whole party were the consequence of Mr. Denham's reading to them the description he had received.

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How unhop'd for, and therefore un-fought for, said the Major, was our present advantage over these vile plotters, and I am rejoiced to find our dear Rosina has so able a friend; the young spark will be a match I doubt not, for all Levet's wiles, and the child of our anxiety and affection equally safe and happy under his protection.

PARSON LEVET was at his wits end; still Edward Denham and Rosina tête à tête! what could his Lordship mean? He took an opportunity of requesting he might read Mr. Denham's letter to Lord Paisley, in order to inform himself, he said, of the true state of the Major's health, Edward replied he had satisfied his Lordship as well in that as every other respect, and referred him to that nobleman for an answer to his inquiries.

ROSINA had now spirits to dress and walk in the garden; in a little temple of which, his Lordship chose to receive her.

The first salute was awkward on both sides; he bid Rosina be a good girl and make herself happy, for that his house and all it contained was at her devotion, and she would find she had only to command to be obeyed. She courtesied her thanks, and, perceiving her company could be dispensed with, resumed her walk with Edward Denham her guide.

LORD PAISLEY, from self-interest, not paternal consideration, advised that Levet, lest the sight of him should startle Rosina, should not be seen by her in *propria persona*; but, clapping on a large black wig, and a velvet suit of clothes out of his wardrobe, pass himself off for a Scotch Baronet; and as any thing was preferable, in Levet's idea, to being excluded from a share in Rosina's amusements, he readily acquiesced, and was introduced, as they were fitting down to dinner, to the young Lady, by the name of Sir Peter Ferguson.

DENHAM,

DENHAM, from the broad grin he had the quickness to trace from countenance to countenance, soon discovered the imposture; but thinking, for a time, it would be better to conceal than betray it to Rosina's knowledge, he paid his compliments to Sir Peter, in common with the rest of the gentlemen; and, contrary to Rosina's expectation, so agreeably were matters conducted, that she found herself very comfortable.

A PERT looking girl was presented her in the afternoon, by the house-keeper, to be about her person, but Rosina objected to her manners and appearance, and begged her waiting-maid might not be either better bred or better dressed than herself.

THE house-keeper told her she herself had a daughter, but was fearful her age would not suit; she is only fourteen, your Ladyship, added she, but very handy, and

would, I am sure, be very proud to attend upon your Ladyship.

SEND her to me, said Rosina, and if her temper be agreeable, her age will be no objection with me.

DRUSILLA came, and promised to be the very girl Rosina could have wished; mild, obliging, uninformed, and innocent. I like her much, said she, and desire she may have every advantage and convenience, from belonging to me, as if she was five and twenty.

THESE agreeable orders gained her two friends at once; and the good-natured and grateful Drusilla said she would live and die in her service.

THESE were circumstances highly pleasing to Edward Denham; for, as he could not be always with Rosina, he was anxious his

his absence should be unendangered by her falling into the hands of her enemies.

HE cautioned Drusilla's mother not to say a word of Levet's metamorphosis without his previous knowledge and consent; and, as a binding motive of good conduct, pledged himself to her that Major Jones should reward both her and her daughter for every extra act of attention to the young Lady.

LEVET performed his part to admiration, and kept the table in a roar by a retrospect of his adroitness, whenever Rosina's retiring from the company set them free from restraint; and one morning, when his Lordship was upon the chapter of compensations, took occasion to observe to Lord Paisley, that he thought a commission in the army would be the most eligible gift he could bestow upon Edward Denham.

No, replied his Lordship, that young
D 6 fellow

fellow has too much merit to be set up for a mark to be shot at; he shall share his father's appointments under me *in presenti*, with the right of succession annexed, and shall be the *major domo* in our absences, wherever his superintendence may make his residence most desirable.

LEVET did not dare to carry his attempts to remove, farther than his Lordship was inclined, what he already deemed a formidable rival, well knowing, that upon all occasions that nobleman was so tenacious of his power and his privileges, that he never pardoned an infringement thereon.

MR. LEVET, whenever he had the happiness to find himself delivered from Edward Denham's scrutinising eyes, paid great attention to Rosina, lamented that no family in the neighbourhood were of equal rank, or indeed of any rank, he said, to have the honour of visiting her, and professed his

his fears that her time would therefore hang heavy on her hands.

IF I could procure a harp, said she, one day, I should be happy to receive a few lessons upon it, for two reasons, one of which is that Mr. Davison, Major Jones's son-in-law, is very fond of that instrument, and that I understand a Mr. Levet (did you ever hear of such a person, demanded she, giving the priest a penetrating look) the unprovoked enemy of all my friends at Davison Hall, is much incommoded by the found thereof, and I own it would be an agreeable, because an innocent revenge, to be able to annoy his ear.

LEVET, Levet, repeated this finished dissembler, I think the name is not unknown to me. Then, by your account of him, my dear young Lady, he is one of those who come under Shakespear's description in every sense of the words—having no

no music in his soul, and being fit for Treason's plots.

O YES, Sir, replied Rosina, and every species of wickedness.

LORD PAISLEY tipped the parson a wink, as much as to say, that is a sort of an unlucky hit; and Levet insisted upon it, so soon as Rosina was withdrawn, that it was not a random but a pointed shot, and he doubted not originated from some secret anecdotes imparted by Edward Denham to his disadvantage.

LORD PAISLEY scouted the idea, and advised him, upon Lord Chesterfields' authority, not to suppose things were personal because they were applicable; and, humming a tune, suddenly broke off, and ordered a harp to be purchased: The girl, said he, shall not languish long for so harmless a companion of her retired hours.

ROSINA

Rosina was pleased with this first real instance of her father's kindness, and having acquired a knowledge of the fingering from Mrs. Davison, was soon mistress of two or three plaintive tunes, which she played with great taste, and appeared, his Lordship said, to such advantage in the attitude of performing on this instrument, that he was resolved she should sit for her picture with her harp before her.

CHAP.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

His Lordship had, though he seldom looked into it himself, a very excellent library. Point me out, said Rosina, I beseech you, to Edward Denham, as you would to a sister, such authors as will best improve my knowledge and language; that, whenever the blessed day arrives of my being restored to my friends at Davison Hall, I may agreeably surprise them by my polite and proper learning.

DENHAM read with her and to her all the most elegant productions in poetry and the drama, and opened the page of history for her perusal; insomuch that Levet found himself always anticipated in his recommendations of authors as well as in his plans of amusement, which was too much for

for common patience to endure. Rosina had seen every object before he had the happiness to point it out to her, had visited every spot to which he proposed conducting her, found every piece of music, procured by him, either too dull for her notice or too difficult for her performance, and continually disliked the dish or wines he pronounced the most exquisite or delicious; yet, notwithstanding every article of her conduct towards him confirmed his suspicions of foul play in Edward Denham, his Lordship could not be induced to believe him guilty, and Lord Paisley did the young gentleman, in that particular instance, merely justice.

Not, however, that it was from a regard to his Lordship's pleasure, or from a principle of imaginary honour, that he forbore the imputed communications to Rosina, but solely from his idea that such communications would alarm and distress, without (in the early stage of her acquaintance with

Levet

Levet, in his assumed character) being useful to her.

IN her state of ignorance, she was quite at her ease when Sir Peter Ferguson addressed her; and it was owing to the simple circumstance of her disliking both his person, manners, and sentiments, that she avoided being obliged to him or meeting him upon terms of sociability.

NEVERTHELESS, numberless incidents resulting from accident alone, were still tortured by him into studied affronts; and these mortifying ideas operating strongly upon his mind, he set his invention to work in order to detect and circumvent his young and powerful foe.

No law of civilization, morality, or religion, was a fetter to his great mind, as must already have been clearly demonstrated; and as gratitude is affirmed never to be a solitary virtue in the human breast, so it is.

believed that ingratitude has evermore its attendant groupe of vices.

ONE great bar to his discoveries was, that the messenger employed by both the Denhams hated him heartily, in consequence of some illiberalities towards him which had transpired, and as the post was not the medium of information from Bath, no foul play on that ground could be practised by him.

HE once thought of bribing Drusilla, but her mother's vigilance, from complicated motives, made it impossible; for she was to his certain knowledge well apprised of the *kind* of man her child would have to deal with; and however incapable of meditating against her own interest on other occasions, had too much of the mother about her to expose her own offspring to infamous tamperings and pestilential intercourse.

HIS tutelar devil did not, however, totally forsake

forsake him; he at last thought of a step, which it was wonderful even to himself did not occur to him sooner, of writing to a person who had the misfortune to be in his debt a couple of hundred pounds, without the power of *immediate* repayment, and was then resident (*incog*) from certain private reasons, in the neighbourhood of Bath, to obtain him a knowledge of affairs in the Major's family. And to this unfortunate wight he wrote without delay, promising not only to give him up his bond, but a handsome present, if he could obtain any useful accounts of Major Jones and the transactions in his family.

THIS, sure, was not thrown out in vain; but the person applied to, being well assured that whatever recompence he obtained at Levet's hands must be by way of premium, for that he was incapable of rewarding *performed* services, he, which was in some degree the case, told him all introduction of himself at the Major's would be impracticable

ticable, unless he had a remittance to improve his appearance, when the way would be open before him; and the more especially, if his spirits were relieved from the weight of pecuniary obligation.

A FIFTY pound bank note was accordingly (out of Lord Paisley's *secret service money*) sent him, together with a discharge of his bond, when, like an honest agent, he turned his whole powers to the undertaking.

HIS first step was to throw himself in Mr. Davison's way, at the coffee house, and enquire with great respect after the health of Major Jones.

DAVISON, who felt himself obliged by the question, replied, he was so happy as to have it in his power to tell him that gentleman was out of danger.

"MR. CLERK, for so this man of deceit chose to call himself, seemed to rejoice in Davison's

Davison's joy on his father's recovery; and, as no etiquette is observed by men to retard the progress of their acquaintance when an inclination is once excited, Mr. Davison walked with him, talked with him, and at length had so good an opinion of him, as to take him home with him to dinner.

CLERK had an open countenance and a pleasing address; he said Major Jones was a gentleman he had been taught to respect at a very early time of life, in consequence of his generosity to one whose friendship he had long since renounced, and whose name he should blush to mention.

THE family understood him, and gave him abundant credit in their estimation for his just sense of Levet's baseness and ingratitude.

APPROBATION for an agreeable object is always progressive. Clerk spoke modestly

himself and prospects, a striking and interesting trait with good minds. He was indeed, he said, one of those people who, with little to hope had little to fear; for, that though his patrimony was very slender and his abilities very moderate, his desires were humble and his wants few; and that of course, if he could not rise to much prosperity, he was not in danger of sinking into severe adversity.

HE discovered the Major's foible, and contrived, by paying resolute court thereto, to rivet himself in his good opinion.

THE most valuable and amiable part of the public, he would observe, were not those who presided in the senate or were adorned with titles; they indeed knew how to spend money with a good grace, but it was in the bosom of commerce that we must look for those who could practise the noble art of acquiring wealth without oppression,

sion, and render themselves the founders of families, and the national bulwark.

MAJOR JONES ardently wished to be made acquainted with this sensible and judicious young man's views and wishes, in order to lend him a helping hand, but as he was always reserved to a degree of caution very singular at his time of life, from motives of delicate sensibility, no doubt, a thousand little decorums prevented its being possible of asking even the most liberal question respecting his affairs.

MR. DENHAM senior, following the general example, spoke highly of Mr. Clerk, and hearing him mention that he was in a few days to visit a gentleman, whose country seat lay in the direct road to Lord Paisley's, considered the solicited and obtained favour of his personal conveyance of such important instructions to his son, one of the happiest imaginable opportunities. Your delivery, Sir, said he, of my letters will give you

you a new acquaintance of nearly the same age with yourself, which I flatter myself you will find perfectly agreeable to you.

AMONGST Clerk's talents, a command of features was not the least eminent. He therefore replied, with a suitable air of countenance, that he should think himself honoured by the introduction, for that though his stay on the present occasion would be short, Mr. Edward Denham and him might meet, when an intimacy was in their power.

THIS step was decisive; for, most unfortunately, believing themselves safe in their friendly conveyance, both Mr. Denham and Mr. Davison wrote without reserve, insomuch, that it required little skill to supply the deficiency in the immediate letters he was intrusted with, for comprehending the whole intrigue against his (Clerk's) worthy employer and coadjutors.

CLERK was upon tenters left some fatal like wind should deprive him, in the very arms of success, of victory; he trembled at every word that was hastily uttered, and turned pale at the sound of every unexpected footstep, lest his glorious commission should be countermanded. He, however, after the most trying anxiety and constraint, was permitted to depart, and Levet embraced him with fraternal rapture.

THE seals of the letters were broke open without ceremony, and the whole plot revealed. His Lordship was incensed beyond every power of self-command; he raved, he swore like a madman, and had not Edward Denham been met at the avenue gate by the tender and diligent Drusilla, and apprised of his danger, his life in all probability had been the victim of his conduct; for, in proportion as Lord Paisley really loved him, and in consequence of that love, confided in him, was he irritated to find himself duped,

dupered, betrayed, abused, and ridiculed by a daring and insidious stripling.

DRUSILLA conjured Denham to fly, and he was not deaf to her council or blind to the necessity of flying from his enemies; but he agonized to leave Rosina behind him in so perilous a situation, if she was even spared the cruelest persecution on his account; and he moreover left her uninformed that Sir Peter Ferguson was the arch imposture Levet.

THE young girl, however, endeavoured to comfort him, by bidding him hope, that if he was only wise enough to save himself at that particular juncture, a time would speedily arrive when he could be serviceable to her sweet young Lady. He yielded to her advice, but not knowing how to dispose of himself, he resolved to become the messenger of evil tidings to his father and the Major's family, and take their opinion of his desperate case; Drusilla having picked up

sufficient intelligence of Clerk's unfaithfulness; and the applause his treachery had procured him, to convince them all Lord Paisley's house would never more be open to Denham or his son, or Rosina accessible to one of her beloved and now deeply lamenting friends.

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CHAPTER VII.

A WARM ALTERCATION.

R OSINA was no less alarmed than surprised to find herself at supper attended by two men servants only, who, by their silence and solemn demeanour, gave the air of a state prison to the apartment she occupied.

SHE asked for Drusilla, the men bowed and looked at each other; for Mr. Denham, they bowed a second time without reply; might she be permitted, she asked, to speak with Lord Paisley's housekeeper.

O NE of the men went out, apparently for orders, and, returning almost immediately, told her Mrs. Maitland would wait upon her to receive her commands.

P OOR Rosina sent away the supper she

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was

unable to taste, and was all impatience until Mrs. Maitland presented herself.

WHAT, Madam, cried Rosina, does all this mockery mean? am I at liberty to chuse my attendants, or am I in a state of bondage, and must learn to submit to the choice of others? where is your daughter, the gentle, the good, the kind Drusilla? am I deprived of her?—Mrs. Maitland sighed and looked down.—If I am, added she in a quick accent, but checking herself, I beseech you, Madam, tell me whence and wherefore this sudden change; and if you can, what further losses are in store for me.

A LITTLE disagreeable accident, my dear young Lady, said the pliant Maitland, has thrown the house into confusion; my Lord has discovered a plot against both his honour and his interest. I have told his Lordship a thousand times you cannot, Madam, with that face of innocence, have the heart to be guilty; but you have friends, Miss Paisley, friends

friends you hold dearer, it is supposed, than your own noble father, who are parties concerned; and for certain, the next thing to acting wickedly ourselves, is to approve of those that do.

ROSINA felt herself undone. Ah me! said she, then I must never hope to see my Drusilla or Mr. Denham more.

MRS. MAITLAND was silent.

THEN do me the favour, Madam, for I doubt not but you can, to tell me who I am to see.

SIR PETER FERGUSON, replied Mrs. Maitland, will have the honour of breakfasting with you.

PRAY, Madam, said Rosina, may I ask one question and depend upon receiving a sincere answer? — If consistent with her

duty, and in her power, it should, Mrs. Maitland replied, be clearly and truly answered.

HAVE you not, said Rosina, a man under this roof of the name of Levet?

NOT at present, replied the artful and equivocating house-keeper.

I THOUGHT he might, said Rosina, be a friend of Sir Peter's; in order to come at the knowledge of which, I once mentioned him to that gentleman in terms of great disrespect; but I confess he appeared uninterested in what I said, and I might therefore be mistaken.—Yet where, O where is my dear Druilla! cried she after a few moment's silence; she, Madam, was no plotter, her acquaintance with the arts, the dangerous and most destructive arts of life, was as confined as my own; petition then, in compassion to my forlorn, my destitute situation, that she may be restored to me.

Do

Do I hear such words as these, said Mrs. Maitland (with well-affected astonishment) from the beloved daughter of Lord Paisley, surrounded as she now is by splendour and retinue, and all any other young Lady (you must pardon me, Madam) could ask or wish for.

How those who are born and bred in the bosom of affluence may feel on such an occasion, I will not take upon me, replied Rosina, to determine; they know, perhaps, no higher happiness, and accept the gratification of the eye for the blessings of the mind. I beg your pardon, however, for detaining you thus, continued she, with, I perceive, unavailing inquiries, and will return to the point from whence I started; can you, Madam, will you procure me the happiness of Drusilla's attendance?

IT is not possible, Miss Paisley, said Mrs. Maitland; any other person's child I might plead for, but Drusilla is too near myself to

save me from the suspicion of partiality; if you make your request with the same earnestness in some other quarter, it may perhaps be granted. I will assist you if you please to undress, and your bell will inform me when that time does arrive. So saying, she courtesied, and Rosina finding her heart was marble, waved her hand for her to depart, and abandonned herself to all the horrors of despair.

So then it seems, cried she, so soon as she was alone, the thunder storm is come at last, and all my dearest hopes must perish. Davison, cruel Davison, from your disregard of me these evils have sprung; had you but rescued me from that vile messenger, and sent me back to my native cottage, I should have forgot all but you, your wife, my uncle! whose names and memories I should have so much revered, that when the day dawned my prayers would have been offered up for your uninterrupted enjoyment of it, and when night approached

I would

I would have wished you the sleep and peace, the kindness of your natures and the nobleness of your actions intitle you to; and this, without variation, would have been the joy and busines of my obscure life, and uninteresting existence. But now I have miseries to encounter, and woes to weep.— Mr. Denham will, he surely will be a sufferer for his tendernes to me; can I ever cease to remember how he soothed, how he cheered me! with a person not unlike Mr. Davison's, and an understanding very little inferior to his, he had a lively, an active, a sustaining pity for me, that I must never know again.

AND my poor Drusilla, cried she, renewing her soliloquy, her crime was loving her mistress! she slept in my apartment, was always about me; her smile endearing, her attendance affectionate. O Drusilla, Drusilla, can I exist without you!

THUS, wholly unmindful of the passing
E 6 hours,

hours, did Rosina continue to lament herself. The passing hours were, however, a very important object with Mrs. Maitland, who wished to devote her usual number of them to repose; she, therefore, finding the young Lady would not call for her, presumed, as she told her, to remind her how late it was become, and once more offered her assistance.

LEAD the way, said Rosina, the only way you well know I am permitted to go, nor mock me longer by asking my choice, when you are sensible I have not the power of choosing in a single instance.

MRS. MAITLAND took up a couple of candles and preceded the young Lady to her chamber; on entering which she exclaimed, look at my poor Drusilla's bed, Madam, and tell me if I have any power! would it be unoccupied, or this apartment a scene of dismal solitude, if I was not encompassed round by persons who delight in tormenting me! but I have done with complaining,

plaining, and if I cannot live with satisfaction, will wait calmly for death to deliver me from every ill. Good night, added she, I am much mistaken, Madam, if *your* repose will for a moment be interrupted by your remembrance of your wretched prisoner.

My prisoner, cried Mrs. Maitland, heaven forbid that the daughter of my ever honoured Lord should consider me as her jailer; you have stung me to the quick, young Lady, by this strange, harsh, and unjustifiable expression; and I will acquaint his Lordship of it before I attempt to go to rest.

I EXPECTED as much, replied Rosina, and you will also please, I hope, to tell him that death, in any shape, is preferable, in my idea, to life as I am situated.

MRS. MAITLAND withdrew, and in this one instance however, kept her word with
Rosina.

Rosina. O, cried his frigid Lordship, all the ills she complains of shall be redressed in the morning, and the contrast will heighten every pleasure in store for her. Light and shade, Maitland, constitute the whole beauty and value of existence.

CHAPTER VIII.

A PLOT SUGGESTED.

THE morning brought Sir Peter Ferguson, alias Mr. Levet, to Rosina's breakfast table, who was all obsequiousness and submission.

You profess a wish to oblige me, said Rosina; if only words of course I beg you will spare my ear, but if heaven and your own good nature inclines you to fulfil those professions, know, Sir, you have the power.

THAT power, Madam, replied Levet, you shall command, though to my own prejudice; teach me how to serve you and it shall be done.

GIVE me back the innocent girl they have deprived me of; is there, Sir, any thing to fear where she is concerned! shall we not

have

have sufficient spies about us to break our stratagems, if we were so weak as to form any? there is comfort, there is consolation to me in the very circumstance that makes her harmless to others; bring her back then, Sir, to me, and I will believe you are my friend.

I WILL exert all my best interest, said Levet, and do not despair of success; but I trust a young Lady of your high claims would not make a low creature your companion.

O BIRTH! cried Rosina, this pride of birth, what ills does it not occasion! Has she not a soul, Sir, as pure as intelligent as mine? Mr. Levet bowed. Is not her form the same? Mr. Levet smiled. And what is there in the sound of title or the possession of wealth to satisfy or support the mind, compared to a sincere, however humble friend, to speak one's thoughts to, without fear of malicious or fatal interruption,

and

and to receive opinions from, that neither deceive nor poison the heart.

SIR PETER made a long and elaborate speech upon the effects and consequences of a romantic turn of sentiment; no one adored goodness in its natural and genuine state more than himself, but goodness carried to excess became infirmity, and lost all its merit and virtue; that private life was fit only for plebeians, and polite scenes alone terrified those who had never frequented them; that a host of admirers would join the train, however unbidden, of beauty, when dignified by rank; and that it was a blamable self-desertion in those who counteracted the will of providence, and preferred obscurity to eclat, when the latter was their right and due inheritance.

ROSINA replied, he had probably argued very well, but that unfortunately the subject was such, as she was incapable of deciding upon, and his language too polite
for

for her comprehension. I have, said she; ideas, but words to express those ideas I have not been at much pains to acquire, and only wonder, when I consider how short a time has passed since I lived at the heath side, that I can already talk so tolerably as my ear tells me I do; but your fashionable subjects, and your fashionable phrases, I shall never be mistress of, for I will not mix with fashionable life on any conditions.

A YOUNG Lady, said Mr. Levet, in the house of her father, I should much rather expect to hear held herself in readiness to comply with his will, than to entertain sentiments of rebellion. What mistake rendered your infancy or your education, Miss Paisley, is one thing; what your noble father's countenance and sanction will render your youth, is another. He is a man of fashion, and can you be a plebeian! a child of Major Jones' might have imbibed such narrow hypocrisies, the daughter of Lord Paisley must look higher.

W H A T

WHAT! higher than happiness, Sir! said Rosina; would that be wisdom? might you not much more naturally conclude that heaven has given me a taste I have not the power to change? My father, I grant, continued she, is a great man, but you seem to forget my mother was a daughter of humility; and as it is plain I do not inherit the pride of nobility, is not the disposition God has given me the marking feature about me of *her* obscure origin; for she was, Sir, obscurely though not meanly born, and decently not finely bred; wherefore, since I am thus unqualified to appear in the circles of greatness, without disgracing my father, why will he not consent to my passing my days with those (and such, Sir, I could mention) who love me for my simplicity, and smile, and not shudder at my blunders.

SIR PETER sipped his tea, lifted up his arrowy hypocritical eyes to heaven, sighed, and y muf was Glent.

WHAT

How

How soon, Sir, asked Rosina, shall I know your success respecting Drusilla; if her return be delayed, it will break my heart; to serve me essentially you must serve me speedily. I cannot, Sir, live in this enormous, this wilderness of a house alone; and there is no companion, except Drusilla, that is fit for me, nor do I like to talk much with men.

MR. LEVET repeated his assurances, that he *would* use his utmost influence with her father in her favour, and that whatever indulgence could be obtained, she should soon be made acquainted with; and, having finished his breakfast, and finding the young Lady was neither to be drawn out into conversation nor amused by him, took a formal leave, and left her to her own reflections.

I WILL give you the merit with her, said his Lordship, of obliging her, so let the chit come back, we may make her useful hereafter.

BEFORE

BEFORE dinner was served in, therefore, Levet knocked at her door, and, telling her he had a present for her, bid Drusilla enter. This, cried Rosina, is kind indeed. He kissed her hand as his reward, he said, and withdrew.

DRUSILLA threw her arms about her young Lady's neck, and wept for joy that she was restored to her; and fear not, said the spirited little girl, I have saved Mr. Denham, by my diligence, from getting into a hobble; and, with the blessing of heaven I will serve you also.

MR. DENHAM, cried Rosina, O where, Drusilla, when did you see him!

AT the avanue gate, replied Drusilla, just entering, after all the huily burly, from opening the letters sent to him by his father and Mr. Davison, was begun; what a mean, what a dirty action, your Ladyship, to open letters intended for another, and steal people's thoughts;

thoughts; it is being a thousand times worse than a common foot pad or highwayman.

AND how, my dear Drusilla, asked Rosina, did you come at the knowledge of all this?

THAT man, returned Drusilla, who sometimes talks scotchified, and sometimes as free from all twangings as his Lordship himself, met the wicked fellow in the hall; his horse smoked from hard riding like a racer.—Have you been successful, said the scotchman, running out to meet him?—I have discovered all, replied the traitor, and here are letters to confirm and explain what I shall relate; they were written in an hour of imagined security by old Denham to his son, and you will marvel at the contents.

THEY spoke, Madam, continued Drusilla, in a *lowish* kind of voice; but I, having flunk close under the great stair case that I might

might not be seen by them (little thinking indeed what I should hear) every word they uttered was as plain to me as what I now say to you ; and moreover, they talked of tossing young Mr. Denham in a blanket, and ducking him in the horse pond, and doubted not, they told each other, but on such provocation, Lord Paisley would let them do whatever they pleased with him.

I AM choked, cried Rosina, with terror ; and did you, my Druilla, save him from such base, such cruel treatment ?

YES, your Ladyship, replied Druilla, and I would save him again and again if it was in my power, from a thousand Scotchmen and a thousand English Lords into the bargain.

BUT how did you proceed, how did you conduct yourself, demanded Rosina ?

I JUST stayed to find they were all cursing and

and swearing the very Hall up from its foundation, replied the girl; and up it would have been, and smacking down upon your Ladyship's innocent head, if curses could have done it. So then, thinks I to myself, I will fit you for this I warrant you; and, flying out at the back door, I clambered over ditches and hedges that stood in my way, before I could reach the lower gate of the avenue without passing full in the teeth of them; and when there, walked and watched and wished for Mr. Denham's coming.

HE did at length come, cried the distressed Rosina?

O YES, your Ladyship, replied the girl with as innocent and unsuspecting a heart as your Ladyship's, when I stopped him and in great haste told him all I have told you. Merciful! how he behaved; he threw himself, Madam, upon the ground, like an distracted madman; wrung his hands; sai-

he was undone, and had lost your Ladyship,
an please your Ladyship, for ever.

PROCEED, proceed, my good Drusilla,
said Rosina.

I STROVE to comfort him, but, alackaday !
what could I say towards comforting so
fine a young gentleman. I however begged
he would remember his own danger, my
danger, your Ladyship's danger, if we were
seen together, and humbly advised him to
be off for a time.

I WILL, I will, said he, fly at present,
Drusilla, that I may hereafter be service-
able; and as the distance is not above thir-
ty or forty miles, and that her friends must
know her misfortune, I will myself go to
them with the news, take their opinion how
I ought to proceed, and return to-morrow.
And O, said he, with a most piteous sigh !
entreat that lovely, that amiable creature,

for so he called your Ladyship, (from the greatness of his grief) to be careful of herself, and I will yet hope to see her again.

AGAIN, and again you will, Sir, take my word for it, replied I, happily see her, if you only keep yourself out of harm's way until the storm is blown over. They cannot, dare not hurt her Ladyship, said I, (and I hope I did not speak unhandsomely) unless you let them hurt *you*; for most badly would she, I am certain, feel, said I, any wound you was to receive on her account.

ROSINA had felt herself disconcerted at one part of this speech, and confused at another, but was relieved by the conclusion. You said perfectly right, replied she; nothing, Drusilla, is so hard to bear as bringing our friends into peril. But when are you, my good and kind girl, to meet him again; when may I hope for the pleasure of hearing of him?

THIS

THIS evening, Madam, answered Drusilla,
or to-morrow morning at the latest; and
now, your Ladyship, I could say somewhat
if I dared.

ROSINA blushed without knowing where-
fore, and the girl hesitated. You do not
forbid my speaking, your Ladyship, and yet
I fear to offend you.

SPEAK, said Rosina, it is not in your na-
ture to intend wrong, and therefore, as the
worthy Major Jones observes, ought not to
be thought wrong.

WHY, this it is, your Ladyship; says one
of the footmen, (a very very good natured
fellow, your Ladyship) says he, I know my
own know; and if I was a young Lady
who had a tyrant for my father, and an an-
gel for my uncle, says he, I would make no
more bones of it, but run away from the
bad to the good relation.

ONE of the footmen! replied Rosina (not a little disappointed that young Denham's name was not mentioned) you must not, Drusilla, tell me what the footmen say about me.

WHY so I thought, your Ladyship, but then again thinks I, what harm can there be in just saying what I have heard, as my Lady can always judge for herself; however, that was not all, your Ladyship.

NAY, said Rosina, you may as well finish now you have begun, the rest cannot be worse than I have already heard.

AND if I was her Ladyship, continued this same good-natured man, said Drusilla, I would get Mr. Edward Denham to take me off, and let the Major alone for knowing how to reward him.

HOLD, said the blushing Rosina, this was

good
too

too much for him to say, and for me to hear,
I however hope this is all.

ALL of the footman, your Ladyship, but
I myself have a word or two.

THAT is quite another thing, cried Rosina,
for I believe you, my dear girl, will
never, from yourself, utter what I ought to
refuse attending to.

NAY, for the matter of that, said Drusilla,
I am not sure you will think it right, though
all out of my own head; but I long to ask
Mr. Denham if he cannot do you such a fa-
vour, and let me go with you.

WHERE, cried Rosina, where would you
have me go!

To your good and worthy uncle; from
the devil and all his works, to God and a
good conscience.

AND would you, Drusilla, said Rosina,
advise me to such a step.

I ONLY fear, replied the girl, some terrible plot is carrying on; that wicked Scotchman seems dying for you, and suppose his Lordship should command you to marry him.

AH, cried Rosina, save me from the apprehension! say what you will to Mr. Denham at his return, get me out of a situation which distresses, distracts me; and I can promise you Mrs. Davison will love and cherish you, and my dearest uncle pile favours on your head. If Mr. Denham will but undertake the matter, I shall think it more than half accomplished, for he has knowledge, Drusilla, and courage, and will conduct us through every difficulty.

NOTHING now occupied the mind of Rosina but the ardent wish to elope. It will

be

be ages, said she, before this young gentleman returns; suspence, how painful! delay, how torturing! never more, Drusilla, shall I be able to compose myself under this roof.



CHAPTER IX.**A PLOT DISCOVERED.**

WHEN Edward Denham reached his friends at Bath, great indeed was their distress and mortification.

EVERY evil, cried the Major, might be easily repaired, except the unhappy fate of poor Rosina. That inhuman and unprincipled man, her father, talked of sending her to a nunnery for education; how grievous a stroke will it be to us all, should he hide her in one for ever, on motives of malice and revenge from our knowledge and connection.

EDWARD DENHAM jumped up. Let me not remain at this distance, said he, longer; I will return and watch all their motions; to a nunnery they shall never carry her,

her, whilst I have life and strength to oppose the outrage on so much sweetness, beauty, and innocence.

A very heroic declaration truly, replied his father; but very unluckily, Edward, this is not the age for chivalry, nor can you procure the aid of any good-natured genii, fairy, giant, or magician, to assist your common-sized endeavours, for preventing an English nobleman from doing what he pleases with his own child.

BUT I protest, said Davison, I should honour my friend's spirit and humanity, and rejoice in his success, if he was to attempt to be serviceable; and, in such a cause, who shall say that heaven would not be propitious.

MAJOR JONES, cried Edward Denham with great ardour, give me but your permission to embark in this however unpromising enterprise, and be assured, if you

hear I fail, you shall hear also that I fail from not accomplishing what was above human powers.

I HOLD up both my hands, said Mrs. Davison, for the deliverance of Rosina, and can only lament I am not a man, for if I was I would level mountains for her deliverance.

THERE is, however, Edward, said the Major, a previous question to be asked; how stand your affections, free or fettered? for perhaps the men of this *refined* and *moral* generation would one and all be too nice to marry a runaway, and if you *could* not, from pre-engagement or other just impediment, I should come off with the loss of a nephew, and our poor Rosina of a husband, by your valiant exertions in her service.

EDWARD coloured up to the eyes and ears, and looked very foolish. The company

pany laughed. But recovering himself, I will not, said he, be laughed from my purpose, and the more especially from the spark of ambition the Major has thought fit to light up in my mind; for, could I believe the prize would be mine, I should think myself sure of victory. In a word, it was soon very seriously decided, that neither of them could do better; and that as there was no opposing her father's measures openly, except in the character of her husband, that if he, Edward, could win her consent, he should have the consent of all present, to become her final and indisputable protector.

THIS was sufficient; Edward Denham trod air, and looked down upon creation as a thing of small value. And so eager was he to return, that he set off at five o'clock the next morning; and, in a horseman's coat, hat, and wig, lurked about the avenue lower gate at Lord Paisley's, in order to meet with Drusilla.

SHE met him, beyond his best hopes, almost immediately met him, and their interview was mutually delighting. For, Drusilla no sooner told how desirous her young Lady was to be carried off, than he informed her he was deputed by her worthy relations and friends for that very purpose; and it was agreed between them that he should have a post chaise with every other necessary, at two the following morning, at the door of a little paddock, of which Drusilla had the key in her pocket; and, as it was moon light, would be easily found by them all, when they would have nothing more to do than to fly to Bath; from whence the Major advised they should proceed to Wales, where Mrs. Jewel would receive them; and her husband, when the due time was elapsed, should marry them: for, until they were married, he should not think them safe from Lord Paisley's violence and pursuit on any other spot.

DRUSILLA told her Lady all that had passed

paffed in this ftolen renconter, which was confirmed by a few lines from Jemima, bidding her, in the name of all her friends, to accept of Edward Denham's affiance without hesitation or scruple; adding, that they were dying to receive her.

THE maid and mistress were equally novices in the busines of elopement; common fense, however, dictated to them, if they incumbered themselves with too many worldly goods it would retard their flight. Drusilla indeed sighed as she caft her eyes towards her Lady's wardrobe; but Rosina said she might safely disregard its contents, for that where they were going she would receive treble the benefits she left behind.

NOT a doubt of effecting their desired purpose occurred to these young beginners in the science of elopement, nor did they apprehend a danger in their journey from which Edward Denham's vigilance and courage would not or could not defend them.

T E D I O U S

TEDIOUS was the day, and slowly arrived the evening. Drusilla fidgetted in and out of the parlour every time the clock struck, on various pretences, just to remind her Lady by a nod, or some other token, that another long hour was at length gone; and, from the dear hope that it would be the last, even a visit from Sir Peter Ferguson was patiently endured by Rosina.

SIR PETER FERGUSON, indeed elated by his fortunate discovery, made such unusual efforts this evening to please, that, if the talent had not been forbidden him by nature, he must have succeeded.

HE talked to her of Mrs. Davison's person; allowed it to be beautiful, and her understanding almost unequalled.

ROSINA was astonished. Sir Peter Ferguson know Mrs. Davison! how could it come to pass, for she had never heard his name once mentioned in her uncle's family.

HE

HE had a relation, he told her, whose daughter was situated at Mrs. Hillman's school, and in his visits to that little girl, he had had an opportunity of frequently seeing and conversing with Miss Jemima Jones.

O! CRIED Rosina, would to heaven I had never been separated from her! what a strange proof of fatherly kindness it is, Sir, to take his child from a place, where she had every advantage, and every felicity in the world, for no other pleasure to himself (as I can find out) but to see her miserable.—Mrs. Davison never spoke, Sir, but to my improvement; her knowledge was abundant, her language refined, and her heart the heart of a Saint. Can you then wonder at my tears, my forlorn condition on such a change; who have I now to speak to, or make me amends for what I have lost?

SIR PETER humbly hoped, he said, that
there

there were *persons* in Lord Paisley's family not altogether contemptible.

It may be so, replied Rosina; but, admitting you, Sir, was one of that number, your sex renders it impossible you should be a Mrs. Davison to me.

SIR PETER told her it was his Lordship's intention, so soon as he was satisfied with her conduct, to take her to London; but, that whilst his doubts of her filial affection and filial obedience were unremoved, she could not expect he would be over solicitous to promote amusements that must strengthen his child's disregard of him, and confirm her in (he begged pardon for using so hard a word) her rebellion against him.

DRUSILLA tapped at the door, the clock having struck ten, and asked her Lady if she would please to sup. Rosina replied she would only have a crust of bread and a

glass

glass of wine, without the ceremony of a supper-appearance, and she was sure Sir Peter would excuse her and join his friends. Sir Peter, however, not chusing to take the hint, Drusilla returned with the glass of wine, &c. and made so many droll motions behind his back, by way of wishing him gone, that all Rosina's anxiety was scarcely proof against the laughing-inclination they excited.

DRUSILLA retired, and the clock striking eleven, again presented herself unbidden, to know if her young Lady had any commands for her.

ROSINA told her she should want her attendance so soon as she had bid Sir Peter good night; and rising made him a courtesy which dismissed him, and she hurried away to her chamber; where, in unspeakable agitation, she remained for three successive hours.

At

AT length the moon was up, and shone in all its midnight splendour, and every star seemed to twinkle encouragement, when the timid Rosina, and her no less timid and inexperienced waitingmaid, stole unheeded down the back stairs.

THE lobby was traversed with cautious steps, and the outward door opened with dexterity; but on advancing to the last point of the court yard—O! horror of horrors!—A fowling piece was fired over their heads, and they both fell lifeless in each other's arms.

ROSINA was the first that recovered; and, concluding Drusilla dead, was nearly relapsing into a state of insensibility, when she opened her eyes.

WHERE am I, cried Rosina, and where is Mr. Denham?—Here, here, said a voice in a gentle whisper, follow my steps and you have nothing to fear.

THE

THE poor things followed with doubtful hope, until Rosina, falling at the feet of their guide, exclaimed, alas, alas, it is his Lordship.

Rosina, said Lord Paisley, for it was himself, how will you bear to look an offended, betrayed, and an insulted father in the face. But you have carved your own destiny; instead of your expected journey, you shall go to France, and there deplore, at your leisure, your disobedient and bold conduct. As for your Don Quixote, he is in custody also, and will be dealt by according to his deserts. Simple, artful, frail, and confident girl, how could, how could you have the vanity to suppose you could elude the vigilance of a whole family, and, supported alone by your wise Drusilla and the fortitude of filial transgressions, remove yourself to a distance from my reach and discovery. But, away, away, you shall know my pleasure, in consequence of my displeasure, in the morning.

CHAP.

CHAPTER X..

A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED.

Now, the fact was, that Mr. Levet had been a perpetual spy over them, had traced Druilla to the avenue gate, seen who she met, and, putting circumstances and circumstances together, got a clue to the whole intrigue.

His Lordship was informed of both his suspicions and his certainties, and he professed himself glad of it; for Rosina, said he, will, by this attempt to fly me, justify my conduct to the world at large for placing her in a situation from whence there is no return. — In short, Levet, said his Lordship, if things turn out as you apprehend, you shall convey her to, and lodge her safe in a convent.

LEVET.

LEVER, got to this acme of his wishes, affected to plead for the poor young Lady with the enemy his address had raised her up. But his Lordship, to impress her mind more powerfully with a sense of the paternal prerogative, insisted upon convicting her himself of criminality; he had forbore, he said, to give her any personal proofs of his resentment on the interception of Denham's letters, and instead of profiting by, she had only abused his lenity.

POOR Rosina re-entered her chamber with a broken heart, and Drusilla sat by her side in dumb sorrow and mute participation of her Lady's deep distress.

THEY went not to bed, and therefore were ready when called upon by Sir Peter Ferguson, at seven in the morning, into his Lordship's dressing room, who, with all the appearance of a stern judge, was seated to receive them.

WHAT does that blubberer do here, said his Lordship, meaning Drusilla, and whence her attendance? let her be sent from my sight, I have no right to govern any man's children but my own. Come forward Rosina, and hear me pass your final sentence.

"ON my knees, Sir, said she, permit me to hear it, sinking down, for I am not able longer to support myself.—Be it so, replied his Lordship, it is the attitude of contrition, and will best accord with what I now hope is the state of your heart. Drusilla, to the astonishment of all present, had the courage to advance and kneel down behind her Lady.

THE carriage is now at the door, and Sir Peter Ferguson will have the goodness to accompany you. You want education, Rosina, continued this *kind* father, and so mild a judge do you find me, that I have contrived to make your necessary improvement your punishment, and alone condemn you to

to pass a few profitable years in a convent. You will be carefed, said his Lordship, for my sake, and well accommodated; for your pension shall be an ample one, and it will be your own fault if you are not esteemed also. When the rust of the heath (Rosina shuddered at *his* mention of it) is worn off, and you can give me a girl of fashion for a daughter, a girl, Rosina, who despairs all dirty chicane, and has got the better of every downward appetite to mix with mud, you shall be recalled from your banishment, and restored to the height from which your coarse and absurd politics have tumbled you. So farewell; deserve, and obtain my favour; I ask no more, and, with this purse, receive the blessing and the forgiveness of an ill-used father.

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e con-
ement
n you
to

ROSINA took the purse, but it dropped from her hand. One request, Sir, said she, one request I beseech you to grant me. If am indeed to consider myself as your child, if any part of your fortune is intended

to

to be my inheritance, refuse not to preserve
my life by letting Drusilla go with me.

HIS Lordship stared.

You have, Sir, seen her heart in her conduct, she will only cheer my hours in a land of strangers, and enable me to submit patiently to your will; her hand is too weak, you know, Sir, it is too weak to break my chains, and if you refuse me this one request, be assured you will soon cease to have a daughter.

LORD PAISLEY gave many severe names to her folly, her presumption, her daring, in making such a request; but, softening by degrees, he said, that if he could be certain she would not again abuse his goodness, she should be gratified, if Sir Peter had no objection to the additional charge of her attendant's company.

SIR PETER professed his devotion to the young

young Lady's wishes; and handing Rosina into the chaise, Drusilla, having bid a hasty adieu to her mother, immediately followed her young Lady, and off they set post for Dover; Lord Paisley congratulating himself that he had thus, with so much reputation, disengaged himself of a full grown daughter, and a living momento of his unprincipled conduct.

THE next business this right honourable personage turned his great soul towards settling, was the fate of Edward Denham, his prisoner, for whose captivity he and his friends had already sung *te deum*.—He was therefore commanded to be brought forth. He was waited for with exultation, with impatience, with anger; when, lo! it was at length discovered he had made his escape through the water closet window. THE particulars of his capture and emanipation were as follow.

THE active Mr. Levet having contrived to way-lay this enterprising youth, he was seized by some of his myrmidons the instant he emerged from the paddock and had raised his foot to clear a stile.

HE made a blow at the fellow and felled him to the ground, but was so unfortunate as to fall with him; when two others of the same infernal complexion rushing forward, he perceived all resistance was vain, and with an agony of soul no words could speak, yielded to his destiny.

THE fellows in the first place bound his hands behind him, and in the second tied him to the stile; after which they calmly turned their attention to the wounded man, who declared he believed his scull was fractured, so violent was the blow Denham had given him.

EDWARD DENHAM would have accepted annihilation as a blessing during this dreadful

dreadful period, and expected no other than instant torture and insult; but so tenderly was his whole soul interested for Rosina, that his self-cares and self-fears had their real foundation in what he apprehended she must suffer.

THIS pause, so little understood by Denham, and therefore so tremendous, was, as previously enjoined by the commanding officer of the night; for even their seizure of him was not to bring them to the house, until the fowling piece, charged with powder, was fired for the double purpose of terrifying the poor young Lady and her helpless attendant, and as a signal for their desired approach. On the firing of which they therefore unbound him from the stile; and "come on, Sir, we shall have little more to do with you," were the words in which they led him follow them, through several dark lobbies in Lord Paisley's house, at the end of which they pushed him into a parlour, it afterwards proved to be, from whence,

without his Lordship's pleasure, there was no possibility of his return.

SILENCE and sadness were soon his only companions. What a reverse of situation! by that time, had heaven favoured his just and worthy enterprise, he should have been far, far on his way to Bath, the wretched Rosina in safety, and the congratulations, the plaudits of his friends, at hand. Instead of which she too was fallen into the iron gripe of enemies, of cold blooded, of cruel enemies, who, he doubted not, would precipitate her into some irretrievable, some fatal misfortune.

IN consequence of these reflections, rage and despair had for a considerable time, b
turns, possession of his heart; when, in one of these moments of mental desperation, he heard a door unlock, and thought his hour of dissolution at hand.

INSTEAD of this apprehension, however
being

being fulfilled, the most friendly accents saluted his ear; a window was unbarred in an adjacent closet, and his unknown deliverer bid him try if he could not make his way through it; this, said the friendly voice, is the last and only chance you have for deliverance, no eye will at this time discover you, no footsteps pursue you, and if you improve your good fortune as you ought, you will escape your persecutors for ever.

ON the report of Denham's not being in custody, his crest-fallen Lordship execrated the heavens, the earth, himself, and his friends, but all to no purpose! Edward Denham was got out of his toils, and what was the most diabolical stroke of all, was, perhaps, at that very instant ridiculing his impotence and unavailing rage! He would have given half, nay his whole fortune, he declared, to have executed his designs upon him, designs of such refined barbarity as cannot with propriety be mentioned. The good-natured footman, as Drusilla called

him, had, however, set him free, and being *alone* when he did it, was fearless of detection; and thus ended the commotions of the morning. And Rosina, Drusilla, and the *pious* divine, whilst Denham was casting about how to proceed, uninterruptedly prosecuted their journey.

BUT this was not all the good-natured footman did for Edward Denham, for he took care to inform him of the young Lady's rout, companions, and destination; and with all the anxiety of wounded humanity, and the ardour of a lover's apprehensions, did he pursue them from post house to post house, hearing of them wherever he came, but still unable to come up with them until they had been some hours safely landed at Calais.

LEVET had every advantage over the distressed Denham, insomuch that no magisterial protection could be applied for by him. A father's name and a father's sanction
consecrated

consecrated his impious deeds; whilst the deliverer of innocence had only heaven, the justice of his cause, and honest artifice to aid his desired purposes. But to give her up was impossible, however hopeless his prospect of obtaining her.

CHAPTER XI.

A SELF INTRODUCTION.

LEVET had never once shewn his cloven foot the whole journey; but, being arrived at Calais, with discretionary powers either to convey the young Lady into the vicinity of the French Metropolis, or to establish her at St. Omers, a conceit struck him, that he should be a fool to return without visiting Paris, the great centre of taste and politeness, as he should always have it in his power to *amuse*, consequently *abuse* his Lordship with fictitious tales of the difficulties and dangers, from Rosina's refractoriness, &c. &c. he had to encounter and to surmount in his service.

EDWARD DENHAM, when satisfied he was under the same roof with Rosina, began for the first time to breathe freely; he had

had agonized on hearing Levet was her conductor, but put great trust in Drusilla's company. He had at length arrived at the pleasure of inquiring after her health, and of watching over her safety; and it was the vow of his pilgrimage, never to quit the track she was compelled to pursue until he could deliver her; and having by letter to England informed his friends of his situation and resolution, he retired to rest.

LEVET's plan was, on his awaking, adopted by him. His hair was tied behind in a pig tail that depended below his rump; his cheeks were rouged, and that marking feature, his eye brows, were boldened and extended by means of a large pin, blacked in the flame of a candle, until he might actually have sat as a model for the head of a Saracen.

His first idea was to have got himself recommended to Levet as his *valet de place*, but his indignation rose against every sub-

mission, even under a counterfeit character, that wretch might exact from him. He therefore determined to seek an acquaintance with him, and pass himself off for a *bona fide* Monsieur, which was no hard task, as he spoke the French language with great facility and elegance, and Levet's ear by no means so critical, had that not been the precise case, to be capable of detecting his deficiency.

LEVET's vanity and avarice were only inferior to a constitutional vice that must be apparent by his conduct; Edward Denham therefore found it an easy business to gain his notice, and to improve that notice into an intimacy.

AND what danger could be reasonably apprehended by the priest? Monsieur Le Bew could alone speak his native tongue, and Mademoiselle Paisley alone spoke English; and as for poor Druilla she was a mere cipher in his estimate. Add to which, that Monsieur Le Bew, (such was the effect of his

his assumed appearance) instead of a fine open-countenanced young man, was a sharp-faced, staring, skipping beau, and Rosina declared her dislike of him; but recollecting that any addition to their party (if not the immediate creatures of Sir Peter Ferguson) would contribute to her and Druilla's personal safety, she made no objection to his occupying a corner of the coach provided for their conveyance to Paris; for which corner Levet took care to make him pay his *full* quota.

ON they went to Paris, without either stopping to view the towns through which they passed, or turning once to the right hand or the left on whatever temptation; for, as Paris, like the British capital, was a populous and busy scene, the priest's prudence told him it would be a much more convenient spot for him to begin his operations upon, than in any place where English travellers would excite general observation.

EDWARD DENHAM was true to his new character, and lamented to Mr. Levet the awkwardness and unpleasantness of his situation in not being able to converse with the ladies; but the mock Baronet begged him to make himself tranquil on that point, for that he was not only happy to act as an interpreter in his service, but that, from the native shyness of the English at those ladies' age, he could assure him they were happy also to receive Monsieur's conversation at second hand.

AT Paris Denham proposed separating; but he was sensible, before he hazarded that proposal, he had contrived to make his company too agreeable, by dint of flattery, and too profitable, by dint of generosity, for Levet to wish he should carry it into execution. It was therefore settled, by that gentleman's own offer, for Denham to be accommodated in the same hotel with his new friend, and that one and the same tradespeople should attend both of them.

THE

THE next day they visited St. Germain's, (for Levet did not think it politic to loose time in pursuing his amusement) where Denham was delighted with the sensible remarks Rosina made upon all she saw, and particularly, when shewn the picture of king James, with the usual address to the English, of "behold *your* king;" for so well acquainted had she made herself with the British annals, that, she said, knowing, as he must, the conditions of his succession, it was wonderful to her he did not adhere to them; for that a protestant establishment could not accord with a catholic sovereign, at least when such sovereign was so weak as publicly to violate his coronation oath, and thereby separate himself from his people; and of course, though majesty in distress (for it need not be here observed that James and his Queen died at St. Germain's, pensioners on France) strongly interested the feelings, misfortunes self-derived could not be deplored, as in cases of persecuted and suffering innocence.

FROM

FROM St. Germain's they soon ran over the four miles to Versailles, where Rosina told Levet there was sufficient magnificence to make foreigners conclude the French nation the first nation in the world. A false impression however, which the tour of the capital instantly corrected; where wretchedness and vanity were so blended, that whilst you compassionated the one, you was compelled to laugh at the other.

THE Queen of France supped and played at cards in public, according to the custom of the country, and Rosina was charmed with the beauty of her hands and arms; no human creature, she believed, she said, having such a pair; an exclamation that involuntarily escaped her as she stood close to her Majesty's elbow, and being comprehended, was so graciously received, that she laid down her cards and extended one of her arms on the back of her chair, to gratify la Belle Angloise with a view of it.

ROSINA

ROSINA was followed in the gardens of the Thuilleries, &c. &c. and admired wherever she came; la Belle Angloise was the word that put whole parties in motion; and Drusilla, with much naïveté, bridled and enjoyed her Lady's triumphs, looking around her, as who should say, I, even I, am her Ladyship's honoured and dignified attendant.

ROSINA disliked the opera, it was so unnatural, and the theatre it was so like a puppet shew; for, not understanding a syllable that was uttered by either the performers or the company, their rouge, the glitter, and the gallantry of all present was so childish and so ridiculous a scene in her sight, that she protested it quite made her miserable to behold them for so long a continuance.

DENHAM and Levet talked French together upon all these occasions, and Levet evermore complained to his friend Monsieur Le Bew of the young Lady's want of taste;

taste; but Denham defended her on her youth and unvitiated ideas. What is called taste, said he, respecting places of fashionable resort in France, is merely an acquired lesson, and has as little in reality to do with the heart of the rest of the audience as with Mademoiselle's heart, only that the French ladies speak the language of ton, votre Belle Angloise the language of sincerity.

ROSINA and her inseparable Druilla, for she would not go to one place without her, were squired by Levet and Denham, in a fiacre, to view the outside of the now-demolished Bastile.

ROSINA's gentle feelings were electrified even by the appearance of its outside. Alas! said she, sighing deeply, how many drooping, hopeless, and agonizing hearts are inclosed therein. O that my voice had the power of unbarring its hundred doors, and setting its worthy captives free! I would, Sir Peter, added she with ardent anguish, prefer

prefer such an act of humanity to all the diadems the universe can bestow.

LEVER grinned approbation, but the grin did not well do its office; and happening at the same moment to cast a glance at Drusilla, and from Drusilla to the tremendous edifice before them, the harmless girl was thrown into a trembling fit all over.—
I protest, said she in a whisper to her young Lady, Sir Peter looks as if he should be glad to see me enter those everlasting doors; but I remember, as you have often been pleased to tell me, ill wishes are powerless things; so his Baronetship may wish, and welcome, all the evil he can wish me, I shall not be one jot the worse for it.

DRUSILLA was vastly amused by the hair dressers and cooks with which Paris abounds; for one would think these people, said she, had no other business in life than to eat and to dress; why, bath itself must be a fool to it,

it, over-ran, as I am told it is, by turn-spits
in the dog days.

DRUSILLA told her Lady, that on passing
a convent she was always seized with an
ague fit; for they are only so many tombs,
said she, where poor people are buried
alive, and God keep us out of them for ever.
— Amen, cried Rosina, I say to that.

DENHAM, finding he gained no ground,
and that Levet appeared to have no imme-
diate design beyond diverting himself at Pa-
ris, wrote to his father and Major Jones'
~~family~~ for instructions, affirming, that unless
some desperate game became necessary (in
consequence of Levet's altered measures)
he would not attempt to strike one impor-
tant stroke until he heard their pleasure.

CHAPTER XII.

AN UNEXPECTED LOSS.

VARIOUS were the opinions this account produced at Davison-Hall, to which place the Major and his friends were returned on his perfect recovery at Bath.

MRS. WELLON was for humbly advising, for the safety and welfare of society, that Mr. Levet should be shut up in the Bastile for life, for she understood the Bastile, though next to an impossibility to quit, was by no means a difficult place to enter.

MAJOR JONES was for sending him on board a man of war, where his delicacy would be put to hard shifts, and his cowardice exposed and punished.

MRS. DAVISON owned she wished him deprived

deprived of his liberty, as that appeared to her the only means to prevent his being mischievous; but as for the Bastile she thought it an unfit place, as the example of his repentance, if he could be once brought to repent, was a benefit, that, by such a disposition of him, would be lost to mankind.

DAVISON was for the most violent, speedy, and effectual measure, he said, of ridding the community of a reproach and a poison, and therefore promoted Mrs. Wellon's suggestion, pronouncing it the wisest he had heard from the whole company.

WHAT say you, cried the Major, instead of a Welch tour, to making a visit to the Continent; we are a group of individuals that have no local fetters, and I cannot have an idea of a higher pleasure than taking these poor girls under our protection by surprise, and striking the villain into conviction.

conviction that both heaven and earth abhor his wickedness, and will tolerate it no longer.

AGREED, and agreed was the general voice; and the Major perceiving Mrs. Wellington's countenance change, asked her which was her wish, to join in the expedition, or to be left behind. Her choice, which was to have the honour of accompanying them wherever they went, was soon made known, and it was resolved Edward Denham's letter should alone be answered in person.

BUT when all things were in readiness, and that the next morning's sun was to have beheld their commenced journey, what should happen, but the arrival of an express to tell them Lord Paisley was no more. One of his gay visitors having prevailed upon him to take an airing (which he had declined doing for many years) in a high phaeton, a sudden shock against the pillar of the avenue gate threw his Lordship-

ship out, and, pitching on an iron palisado, he was killed on the spot.

MAJOR JONES was greatly affected at the news. A life so blamable, and a death so instantaneous was awful, he said, and beyond measure deplorable. Mrs. Davison relieved herself by tears. Mr. Denham and Davison stood in fixed astonishment. And Mrs. Wellon, recovering the thunder clap the news had been to her feelings, very calmly observed that the will of Providence was not to be resisted.

THE journey to Paris was now laid aside; as, instead of farther stratagem and intrigue for defeating the wiles practiced against Rosina's safety, under the sanction of the paternal authority, it was sufficient for the Major, in the united character of uncle and guardian to the young Lady, to despatch Mr. Denham to demand her from the priest, and convey her immediately to England.

ON

ON searching his Lordship's cabinet no will whatever was found; the Major of course had the regulation of every thing; and the smooth-tongued Maitland, who never lost sight of her own interest, hoped his new honour would not forget how serviceable her child had proved to her young Lady, and believe, that whatever was wrong in the family was in no degree her fault, or with her participation; for that she had confined herself entirely to the offices of her station: and as his Lordship was just and good to her, she hoped she should not be condemned because unaccustomed to pry into his private concerns.

MAJOR JONES admitted, though he was not deceived by her plea, for true it was, that however the mother was disapprovable, the daughter had claims to consideration. He therefore continued her salary to her for life, and permitted her to furnish a distant lodge in the park with articles from the house of her deceased master, there

to

to remain so long as she found it agreeable to her.

As to the rest of the servants, except the footman of worthy mention, they were all swept off the premises as so many nuisances; which footman, on being asked and urged to speak his wishes of future provision, and speak them freely, besought the Major (for that gentleman disdained to assume a disgraced and dishonoured title for several preceding generations) to make him one of his gamekeepers, which was, he said, the utmost height of his ambition; a request that was complied with on the instant, with an annuity annexed of forty pounds a year to him and his heirs for ever.

MRS. MAITLAND made many forward overtures towards an acquaintance with Mrs. Wellon, as a sisterhouse-keeper, which the Major perceiving, soon let her know her mistake. Mrs. Wellon, he said, was a gentlewoman, and in a most particular man-

ner

ner, from her friendship for him and his, intitled to a gentlewoman's situation and provision. He therefore, in the presence of Maitland, gave her a deed for a hundred pounds a year, and the unlimited privilege of residence at his respective seats, according to her own choice and inclination; together, moreover, with a bank note for five hundred pounds, that she might amuse herself, the Major said, with leaving a few little tokens of remembrance to those she wished, when, where, or however otherwise distinguished, than by her good opinion and friendship.

A LETTER now arrived from Mr. Denham senior, to inform them that the packet in which he embarked had been nearly perishing in a storm, insomuch, that after fighting it out by every act of toil and desperation, they were obliged to make Havre de Grace, where he lay ill of a severe cold and the fright, which would oblige him, he was apprehensive, to give up the prosecution of his journey for at least a few days.

THE Major and his family were much alarmed by this circumstance, as Edward Denham had not wrote according to their expectations; which Joseph Holland the gamekeeper observing, offered his service, and was joyfully députed to carry the Major's commands to Paris, as he was known to be both an honest and a well-judging man.

AND thus was a second special messenger despatched in quest of the fugitives; yet, by one fatality or other, was no intelligence obtained; insomuch, that Mr. Davison declared, if a happy period was not put to their suspense the ensuing day, he would himself make them a visit. A resolution the Major and Mrs. Wellon applauded, but Jemima sighed and was silent.

LET us then, said the Major, as it is apparent our opinions do not altogether concur on this occasion, let us, as I first proposed, make a family party of it. Wellon, I see plainly, has an itch for gadding, and

Jemima's

Jemima's eyes tell me she has no disinclination to the journey under the auspices of her dearly beloved husband, but what an unfashionable creature she must be to conceive every company incomplete without her *cara sposa* is at the head of it.

DAVISON said he was ready implicity to comply with the Major's desires, though he thought it his duty to ask if, as there were two great roads between Calais and Paris, it was not possible they might miss of Rosina, and defeat their own designs.

NOT, the Major replied, if a courier was despatched with proper instructions the road they did not travel, and a place of general rendezvous appointed.

DAVISON then begged pardon for saying women were to his mind incumbrances in journeys of business, and that therefore Jemima and Mrs. Wellon would be much better at home.

JEMIMA blushed, and was well aware of his motive for setting up this bar against her; but protested it was all a mistake, and that she had no inconvenience whatever to fear, either from sea sickness or the little fatigue people encountered who had the way smoothed before them, as the Major's liberality would render hers.

Mrs. WELLON supported Jemima's assertion; and in short the Major laughing, told Davison that he clearly discovered they must either take the women with them, or agree to stay at home themselves. It was therefore carried all to nothing in favour of the journey, and Mrs. Wellon secretly rejoiced that an opportunity at length offered for her seeing a country she had long wished (from the natural curiosity of her temper, though hopelessly) to see.

THEY all set off in high spirits for Dover and the wind being fair, without having a moment's time to view the antiquities o

the place (as Mrs. Wellon would gladly have done) embarked the succeeding hour to their arrival.

MRS. WELLON, who had never been at sea before, was so alarmed at the deadly sickness, as she called it, with which she was seized, that she would have given worlds to be on shore.

WHAT had I to do, unhappy woman as I am, cried she, (unless it had been by my ever honoured master's particular desire) at my time of life, with visiting foreign countries. If these are the joys of travellers, may I only once be restored safe to Davison Hall, and I will never more quit it to see sights. For, O Madam! said she, addressing Mrs. Davison, my conscience accuses me with having much more of self-gratification than of Miss Rosina's welfare at heart, when I so boldly pushed my little influence in promotion of this dangerous

voyage; and we shall all, I verily believe, go to the bottom.

WHAT! in a calm, said the Major, that would be wonderful indeed. And is it thus, Mrs. Wellon, you keep up Jemima's spirits; the purpose for which I thought you had had the goodness to accompany us?

IF I have disobligeed *you*, Sir, said she, by my foolish behaviour, could I perish alone, it would be mercy to my feelings.

THE woman is frantic, said the Major laughing. When pray, Mrs. Wiseacre, did I ask more of you than you was able to perform; sickness and fear, you silly body, are not dependant upon the will, and cannot therefore offend the most despotic prince.

THIS new speech had the desired success, and Mrs. Wellon revived; but, to the great entertainment of the sailors, was upon her knees

knees every capful of wind that blew, to implore the protection of heaven for Major Jones and his children, whatever might be her wretched fate.

WHEN they reached Calais, the tide, as it is usually contrived, was spent, and they were obliged to be carried to shore on men's shoulders.—Poor Mrs. Wellon, in this state of conveyance, from the terror of her heart, and the lightness of her head, had the misfortune to be well soufed; and, finding she must fall, clung to the fellow whose shoulders she was upon with so sudden a jerk, that he lost his foot-hold, and they were both of them invisible for at least a second.

THE Major tried to give the accident an air of mirth to Jemima, but unluckily without effect. She was thrown, by her fright, into an alarming indisposition, and when conveyed to the hotel, the very evil her husband would have tenderly guarded

against took place, and there was no proceeding until she was out of danger.

Mrs. WELLON would never be prevailed upon to leave her apartment, declaring if she died she should deem herself her murderer; nor could even the Major himself bring her to reason or composure.

In a few days, however, she was relieved. Mrs. Davison was able to sit up, and, by the end of the week, (during all which period no letters were received by them, and Rosina and her friends were in consequence thereof concluded, in despite of all their care and caution, to be gone to England,) she was pronounced perfectly restored, and at liberty to pursue her journey.

DAVISON hinted her return, but the Major put in his protest, she shall never cross the ocean, said he, without us; we will have one destiny, and either revisit England safe and sound, or perish together.

MRS.

MRS. DAVISON's health restored, the general cheerfulness was restored also; and the Major was highly entertained by the awkwardness of Wellon, who, though she had learned French, as it is called, at an English boarding school, was utterly incapable of understanding the jabber, she phrased it, of the natives of France. If they would but talk distinctly, she said, she should not be at such a loss; though the Major vowed her best attempts at speaking the language must be just as intelligent to them as if she had addressed them in Welch.

THIS, together with her whimsical remarks upon the dress, manners, &c. &c. of every one she met with, created so much pleasantry, that the Major said it made ample amends for all the terror she had occasioned them (except the loss of his grandson) and that the journey would have been nothing without her. But above all the rest, at length, so ridiculous an idea did she imbibe from the tinkling of the college bells

wherever she came, and the crowd of friars she was continually encountering, that she suspected all those who looked at her were going to drag her into a convent, never to escape from thence so long as she lived.

SET your heart at rest, my good Wellon, said the Major, youth and beauty, I grant you, have proved temptations to outrage in these sons of the Church.—Ah, poor poor Miss Rosina, cried Wellon!—But, continued the Major, I believe there is not one instance on record where an elderly gentlewoman unendowed with wealth was ever violently compelled to pass her days within the walls of a convent.

I BEG your pardon, Sir, replied Mrs. Wellon, malice and revenge have gone as far as that; and I am fully persuaded, that if the wicked Mr. Levet knew I was so near him, and to what excesses shutting me up would punish me, I should be clapped into

into one of these strong holds without judge or jury, though he himself was even forced to pay for my melancholy maintenance.

BEING once more set off on their friendly expedition, and that with fair and promising prospects, they began to amuse themselves with plots respecting their mode of introduction to the priest, and of delightful rencounter with Rosina.

ROSINA, the Major insisted upon it, should be left solely to the gentle Jemima's care; that Mrs. Wellon should take Drusilla under her protection; whilst himself and Davison settled accounts with Levet.

AND here Jemima begged leave to throw in a word; that Levet deserves neither lenity nor mercy, said she, I acknowledge, nevertheless, any measure that would directly or indirectly, by endangering his life en-

danger his soul also, must entail self-reproach and self-regret on every worthy mind.

We will be guarded, replied the Major, at all points. He shall be detected, exposed, and scorned as he deserves, but the tenderness and morality of your admonition shall be attended to; for no man living can be worse qualified to appear in the presence of his creator than so practised and hardened a villain.

THE Bastile, Mrs. Wellon again affirmed, was the most eligible disposition of him, for that he would there have time to repent, whilst he was rendered incapable of committing new offences.

IN conversations such as these did they endeavour to lose their apprehensions for Rosina's safety; but, in proportion as they had lulled their apprehension to sleep was their dismay, when, on arriving at Paris, they could obtain no satisfactory account of her.

THREE

THREE men, it was said by the people of the hotel where she had resided, contrived to convey her away, but whither, or for what purpose, they were wholly ignorant, or with or without her own consent.

DAVISON insisted upon it, that the police was too happy a regulation in France for them to be in danger of seeking, without obtaining information; but he lived to confess there was a prevailing influence, and a mysterious chicane practicable in even this happily regulated kingdom, that could elude the scrutiny, and arrest the arm of justice; no one could be brought to own they were acquainted with a single iota of the transaction; and these worthy travellers were obliged to submit to circumstances they had not foreseen, and, as the *ultimatum* of their hopes, turn their inquiries to poor old England.

MRS. WELLON said, the artful and the vain might commend France as much as they

they pleased, but, for her part, she thought it a shocking place, and never desired to see it more.

AND thus do people make themselves the measure of all things ; and, because disappointed in their immediate wishes or probable expectancies, condemn a kingdom at large, and circulate their prejudices for gospel truths, to the utmost verge of their intercourse and connections.

CHAPTER XIII.

SOME NECESSARY EXPLANATIONS.

IT is time, however, to explain the cause of this party's distress and disappointment.

LEVER, whose heart and soul was bent upon evil, took a most effectual method to advance his embryo purposes.

HE had unlimited credit on one of the first banking houses in Paris, and having a kind of remote idea that the Church of Rome, when his career of gay pursuits was finished, must become his final assylum, thought it might be prudent to gain a few friends therein by his liberal donations, on this his unhopred for visit to Paris.

AND with a friar of solemn exterior, but corrupt heart, did he form an almost instantaneous

neous connection. Sympathy pointed them out to each other; and as Levet, in conformity to Saint Paul's rules, chose to make himself all things to all men, he first held religious controversies, next confessed conscientious qualms in consequence of those controversies; and at length, though privately, wound up his hypocrisy, by abjuring the protestant faith, and pledging himself for the conversion of the young Lady, whose guardian he announced himself to be.

SHE is, said Levet, the only daughter of a British nobleman; but, from matrimonial discontent, bred at a distance from him, and therefore little paternal or filial affection subsists between them. But this will not lessen, added he, the advantages of her renouncing the world to whatever convent she may be persuaded to make choice of; for she has a settled and unalterable inheritance with which to endow it, and probable dependance for large sums on an uncle

who is worth at least a hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

But will not her companion also become a profiteer, demanded the friar?

HER companion, replied Levet, is only her servant, a low, pert, mischievous hussy, and would destroy the morals of a whole sisterhood; she shall be otherwise disposed of. And thus he went on, feeling for ground, until he should find his foot so firm as to encourage him to open his most secret designings on the friar's knowledge.

DRUSILLA had a surprising quickness of ear and memory; and, mixing in a much greater degree than her young Lady, with the French, soon acquired a wonderful facility in understanding what she called their grimaces, and interpreting their conversation.

LEVET and his friend the friar had their frequent,

frequent, though *private* conferences, and this arch girl's curiosity, if not her suspicions were excited. She believed Sir Peter capable of any dirty work, and could not bring herself to judge favourably of a set of men whose manners and appearance disgusted her.

BESIDES, young and uninformed as she was, she could not at times but think it strange, as Lord Paisley had commanded his daughter to be placed in a nunnery for education, together with herself that daughter's attendant, that they should be kept by Sir Peter Ferguson at a hotel in company with a queer looking Frenchman (Edward Denham) whose keen eye was here, there, and every where at once, and she should not be surprised if it ended in his snapping up her young Lady.

SHE moreover observed that Sir Peter was fond of Rosina himself, for that whenever the Frenchman was absent, or that he thought

thought no one minded him; he would contrive to touch, though without taking her hand; would place her ringlets right on her shoulder, and always sit between her and the Frenchman at table; in a word, so great was her dislike to Denham, from his disguise, that she wished him hanged, drowned, anywhere, every where, but where he perpetually, like old nick, she said, would be at their elbow, nor was her aversion to Sir Peter much superior to what she felt for him.

LEVER, having unfolded himself by slow degrees to the holy man, his friend, became at last so bold as to tell him, that as he well knew a sinner made the best of saints, he must beg leave to accomplish his own views first, then the church should possess him wholly; and my plan, continued he, is this.

I HAVE authority from my Lord, her father, to make my ward, his daughter, a convert,

convict, in the course of her education, if she is not disinclined; but that act would neither answer your purposes nor mine; therefore, could I but convey her to a place of profound privacy for a week or so, his Lordship might be given to understand she was disqualified, by the outrage of persons unknown, for appearing in the great world, or contracting a marriage with a man of rank, and he would never take the trouble to inquire into the matter, and was therefore become desirous to hide her grief and her disgrace in the faithful and compassionate bosom of a convent.

THIS was clue sufficient for the friar, he told him of a situation so well adapted to deeds of darkness, that the enemy of mankind, if he had turned architect, could not have produced a better; and it had, moreover, the recommendations of being near at hand, the avenues to *it* open, the gate unbarred, and nothing more requisite than to arrive and take possession of it; for that,

that, to sum up the whole of its merits, it belonged to one of the brotherhood, was sacred to pious contemplation and pious penance, and of course secure from all human interruption, when devoted to the service of a friend.

LEVET was in raptures, and determined to follow up his good fortune. The friar, to complete his good-natured offices, promised to give him his personal guidance and assistance on the slightest intimation.

DRUSILLA was lively, active, and prying; Mr. Levet, secure and unalarmed; insomuch that she gathered up an imperfect item of a design forming by Sir Peter and his midnight counsellor, of carrying off Rosina, and leaving her behind with the eager-eyed Frenchman; and was prepared, with all her powers, to defeat it. She was well aware of her young Lady's inability to do ought, and fearful of Levet's discovering, from her timidity, that she was alarmed;

alarmed; she therefore resolved to keep her opinions close locked up in her own breast, and to fight it out as well as she could.

LEVET offered tickets for the play, the opera— She refused accepting them. He was angry—but she was unmoved. She had had a frightful dream, she said, as how that her dear young Lady was tumbled into a deep pit, and she would never leave or forsake her; and let come what would come, they would both go together.

LEVET was at his wit's end, and begged the Frenchman would draw her off for a few hours; as to tell you the truth, said he, I have some affairs to regulate I wish may escape her impertinent observation.

DENHAM promised to do his best to oblige him; but, said he, it is evident I do not stand well with the young gipsey; can you

you teach me how to recommend myself to favour.

SHE is all caprice and inquisitiveness, replied Levet, and crosses me like any evil genius at every angle; I therefore do believe, unless you can rid me of her, I shall be provoked to take some more violent method.

DENHAM was scared. I have so little knowledge of your English customs, said he, that I am at a loss how to act; English women are free, and without doubt great politicians. And my countryman Marmon-tel observes, that even a French girl of sixteen, if she has but a little personality, is a *Machiavel*. Drusilla, though no beauty, is a very pleasing creature, and would have a host of men at her devotion in every French town she passes through, on an appeal for protection; for gallantry, you well know, is the religion of a Frenchman; it would be in vain to combat a national and hereditary

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ry spring of action, for no defiles of difficulty or danger would on such an occasion retard their warmest services. I may win her if I can, I dare not attempt to constrain her; this Edward said, (trembling for the safety of Drusilla,) as a hint for the priest.

Levet, though he thought highly of the young Frenchman, could not bring himself to trust him, but turned his thoughts to an expedient that bid fair for success in the natural course of events.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XIV.

A BOLD STROKE.

THE mistress of the hotel, a very fine lady and a specious artful woman, was reported to be taken suddenly ill, at a late hour; and this too, after so fatiguing a day, from an unexpected flow of company, that not a servant in the house could keep their eyes open to attend her. My Lord Anglois, *alias* Sir Peter Ferguson, *alias* Mr. Levet, was therefore applied to, in the most earnest and touching manner, to prevail upon the sweet English Lady to permit her little waiting maid to sit up by her for a few hours.

ROSINA's humanity was interested, and her self-apprehensions suspended. She gave her willing consent; but Drusilla, who fancied she could translate Sir Peter's looks,

did not happen to like the turn of them at that instant, and replied, that she thought her Young Lady's safety of more consequence than the lives of a thousand French-women; and that she would not pass a midnight hour out of her chamber for any one.

LEVET asked Rosina if she was tame enough to submit to such insolence from a trumpery girl: and poor Rosina being so unfortunate as to think her wrong, yielded to the arguments of the priest and her own good nature, and commanded her to do as she was required.

DENHAM was gone to bed with a fit of the toothach; but Drusilla privily resolving to set a watch in her absence, if she had died for it, she said, found means artfully to knock at his door, and, in a low whisper and disjointed French, besought him to listen to her Lady; for, said she to herself, if he loves her, he will not let Sir Peter do her

her any harm, and if he is honest, he will do her good for honesty's sake.

DENHAM, who had fallen into a profound sleep, being thus awakened, was thrown quite off his guard; and, calling her by her name, to her utter astonishment, asked her, in as plain English as she had ever heard in her life, what was the matter, and wherefore she left her Lady alone.

HEAVEN defend us, cried Drusilla; have I got to deal with a conjuror! I came to a Frenchman, but find an Englishman! I shall die with fright, for no good ever yet came of dealing with the devil.

BE careful what you say, returned Denham; I am a friend of your Lady's, an English friend, disguised for the purpose of serving both her and you, in an hour of need.

THEN will I be put to death, said Drusilla,
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filla, if you are not the good, dear Mr. Denham: fool that I was, not to find you out sooner. Ay, ay, with all your wisdom, Sir, I can now recall a million of little slips that would have betrayed you to me, if my head had not been totally stupified. So let's talk no more of it; but watch and pray, for all the imps of darkness are abroad; and I am going to sit up with a Frenchwoman who is no more sick than I am, and my Lady is left by herself, with God's good providence only for her protection.

I AM up, cried Denham, dressed, and my ears shall be open to every sound. So, carry on the deception, my good Drusilla, and let us find out what the villain would be at; for well do I know him for an atrocious, a flinty-hearted villain. And away tripped Drusilla, all life and joy at her discovery.

THE Frenchwoman pretended to be violently ill, and kept Drusilla constantly employed, now warming some flop or other for

for her, and then smoothing her pillow; this moment at her head, the next at her feet; for the very purpose, the distressed girl's mind told her, to prevent her attention elsewhere.

LEVET, when all was ready, drawing an unperceived bolt on the outside of his French friend's chamber door, (put on that very afternoon) cried murder, thieves, murder, thieves, but much rather in a low hollow voice, than with the vociferation usual on such alarms. And rushing with this cry into Rosina's apartment, through a pannel loosened for his admission, caught her up in his arms all terrified as she was, and, throwing a cloak around her, had conveyed her to the foot of the stairs, before the distracted Denham could force the door of his room open, to give her assistance.

DRUSILLA, whose self-created fears would not permit her to sleep, on the outcry of murder, thieves, was bid by the sick

Frenchwoman to bar the entrance to their apartment, and then, said she, we shall be safe, for no human power can break through to hurt us.

Yes, said Drusilla, I shall bolt myself in with you and leave my dear Lady to shift for herself! that may be your fine custom in France, but we English people never forsake our friends and benefactors in time of peril. This she said while she was getting herself disengaged from flops and stools, and fifty impediments, which, till then unobserved by her, stood in her passage out. And the woman in bed, not understanding English, supposing she was thanking her for her care of her, while she was reviling her and making her way out as fast as she could, instead of laying hold of her (as she would otherwife have done) and detaining her by force, only lifted up her head to behold her out of her reach, and pursuing her Lady, with cries, into the hall. Here Denham and Levet were struggling,

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the one to preserve, the other to bear away the now lifeless prize; for Rosina had discovered her danger, and was swooned away in Levet's arms: a struggle that would soon have been over, but from the fear each was under of wounding the Lady for whom they were contending.

BUT before Drusilla (as Denham's auxiliary) could turn the scale in his favour, the door, that stood ajar into the street, was pushed at by a man, who no sooner put in his head, than the quick-eyed girl, by the glimmering of a lamp, (the candles being all dexterously extinguished) knew him to be Joseph Holland, the footman of Lord Paisley; whose powers united with Denham's, for the distress told itself, presently extricated the reviving Rosina, from Levet's possession, and felled him at her feet.

THE master of the hotel now thought it decent to come forth; and was all astonishment and concern. He never, he said, had

any disorder in his house before, and intreated the confusion might cease, in pity to the reputation of an innocent and deceived man, whose reputation was the only fence between him and ruin, and whose wife he believed was in the agonies of death.

DENHAM had his reasons for acquiescing with this request; and it was settled that Rosina and her faithful Drusilla should return to bed, and if possible to repose, until morning, with Joseph Holland at their chamber door to guard them.

ROSINA said she could not attempt to compose herself until the miracle of her deliverance was explained to her. And on discovering that the Frenchman, so long the object of her dislike, was no other than the noble and amiable Edward Denham, her joy was near producing the same effect her fears had done; but she relieved herself by shedding tears:

NEVER,

NEVER, perhaps, was situation more critical than this of Rosina, for the kind and holy father was at hand ready to assist his new convert; but had retired on the appearance of a man, not being prepared for deeds of death, as every care had been taken to prevent interruption. And thus did the good genius of Rosina, in the moment of extremity, interpose, in the person of the gamekeeper, who, with all his diligence, was but just arrived in France. And, on finding all was over, the friar secured his own retreat, and rejoiced he could effect it without detection.

NOR would it, it is believed, be to misrepresent facts, if it was added that the master of the hotel had a like active and interested concern in the attempt; but as it is well known, that on the Continent, to intrigue under the sanction of the church (with a few exceptions) is to intrigue safely and successfully, his part required only a calm and plausible demeanour, a persuasive

address, and an air of innocence, to perform it with a good grace.

Not that this account is in any degree intended as a general stigma, for, though the church of Rome has its Levets, its wolves in sheep's clothing, it has its faithful and pious votaries also; men who have died to seal the sincerity of their religious professions with their blood, and whose lives have been as exemplary as their doctrines were pure, and evinced them the true servants of Heaven, and friends of mankind.

WHEN the morning arrived, the *maitre d' hotel* renewed his petition, that his house might not be exposed; intreating them to remember in his favour, that no intrigue or violence had been attempted under his roof until over fatigue, and too much wine, he was afraid, had locked up his servants' senses, and the hand of disease had fallen heavy upon his wife; and that in return for
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the lenity, the graciousness he solicited, he would render the Lady and her friends every service in his power.

DENHAM, aware of the ingenuity and the venom of slander, and having, on the instant of Rosina's deliverance, felt his delicacy wounded by the idea of a tale's getting into circulation to the dishonour of her he loved, (for it would have been to little purpose, in the ill-natured part of the world's opinion, that he was witness to her being spotless as angels,) was desirous of leaving France as privately as possible; and therefore accepted the submission of the man (whom he nevertheless suspected of being guilty) for an atonement of unaccomplished mischief. And having despatched a letter to Major Jones and his father, to inform them he was on his return; as also to Lord Paisley, with a general account of what had happened, he preferred going down the Seine, &c. to Ostend, and from thence embarking for England, to every other

mode of travelling on that occasion ; bringing Levet with him, a kind of voluntary prisoner, to be proceeded against as Lord Paisley and the Major might judge best.

THE ceremonials of voyaging, &c. were accordingly observed by him ; and, after having been detained four days at Ostend by contrary winds, they were all at length safely landed on the British coast.

AND thus effectually were the priest's views broken off and disappointed ; for he had flattered himself, it would always be in his power, as a last stake, to enter some devout brotherhood. But then, he looked forward to a length of iniquity, which included his revenge upon Rosina for despising his tender overtures when only a cottage-nymph, and the gratification of his long-cherished love for Jemima. And such an adept did he conceive himself to be in the science of deceit, that, Proteus-like, he had only to assume a new shape, to elude the most

most penetrating observation, and throw the most guarded mind off its centre. As it proved, however, he had greatly miscalculated his destiny: the thread was spun too fine to hold longer together; and, snapping short in Edward Denham's hands, shut in his gilded prospects at once, and levelled his towering ambition with the dust.

AND here, we cannot help remarking, that bad men, when they happen to belong to the clerical profession, having nothing more to occupy their mind or time than the temporary services of the church, are a scourge to society; for, as it is obvious in the case of Levet, were they bred to some laborious trade or manufacture, their mental endowments, and indefatigable bodily industry, would render these annoyers of society valuable acquisitions in those walks of life, where fashionable manners and fashionable vices would be unattainable and unprofitable: for, with the labouring hour on his shoulder, even parson Levet would

would have had other wishes than running away with every beautiful woman he saw, together with most of his other diabolical and licentious propensities.

CHAPTER XV.

A DISAPPOINTMENT:

THE gamekeeper, as an *avant-courieur*, was despatched to Davison Hall, to announce Rosina's and Drusilla's safe arrival, and Denham's prowess; and to inform the Major, and Mr. and Mrs. Davison, how impatient Rosina was to give them a personal relation of the whole transaction.

THE gamekeeper, to his unspeakable mortification and astonishment, found the Hall deserted by its inhabitants — the Major, Davison, his wife, and Mrs. Wellon were gone to France; and not an individual could tell when they would return.

MR. DENHAM senior was indeed come back, both a sick and a disappointed man, in consequence of letters from England, informing

forming him of the family party; and he most sincerely rejoiced to hear of his son's and the Young Lady's escape from danger.

THE diligent Joseph Holland met Rosina on the road, with this disagreeable news; and Denham, as he had undertaken, during his absence told her her father was dead, but mentioned not the shocking particulars. She had, however, too just a sense of the fitness of things, not to be much concerned, that he died without preparation and repentance.

LEVET, on hearing of his patron's loss, gave up all hopes of rising more. He had cherished, it seems, some secret dependence that he was too profound a master of arts, to forfeit either the countenance or the favour of a man, who had made him his secret-keeper and counsellor, from the report of enemies. But, no sooner was he assured that his Lordship was got beyond the reach
of

of deception, than he sat silent and sullen; and overwhelmed by gloomy reflections.

Rosina was also informed, that, by her uncle's generous care, she (on the death of her father) was become possessed of a fine fortune: but she declared she should never think any thing her own whilst her uncle lived, for that both her conduct and her provision should equally be regulated by him. Edward Denham, however tempting the occasion for the discussion of this point was, forbore to put in his claim, as by the Major's fanaticism he might have done. But now that the Young Lady was in England, and Levet in bondage, he was certain that his self-command might be set up as a respectful compliment to both the absentees and the fair Rosina herself, with infinite advantages to the *complimententer*.

Rosina ordered handsome mourning for Drusilla, who avowed, but not in her Young Lady's presence, to Edward Denham,

Denham, that she never dressed herself with so much pleasure before, in all her born days: and for why, added she, — he was grown so old in iniquity it was in vain to hope or expect he would ever alter his behaviour. And moreover, that it was well if the grave could hold him, he must have such a large account, she said, to set even with those he had injured in manifold instances.

WHICH last idea, operating strongly upon her imagination, and transpiring amongst the lower orders of the family, every noise was construed by the weak and the ignorant into an approaching visit from Lord Paisley. But he need not come to me, said Drusilla, for forgiveness, (though I was so near being shot by his cruel and vile commands, on our way to the paddock) for it is not my nature to be at variance with the grave or its inhabitants, Lord help us, who are crumbling into dust, and are stripped of their titles, and their fortunes, and their honours,

honours, and their retinue, in their melancholy passage thereto. Ah! little did his now laid low Lordship think his days were so closely numbered, when he had my poor dear trembling Lady, and me, half dead before him, like two *felonious* criminals, and his voice was to speak us into either safety or ruin.—Yes yes, continued she, methinks I see him, with his hungry-looking jaws, and his fine befringed night cap, and his lilly white hands, and his grandee night gown, telling the wretches about him to take me away. But not a wretch of them all had the courage to lay a finger upon me, and here I am to tell it; whilst his great and dread Lordship is food for the worms. I pity them, however, for their scanty meal; unless they can feed upon bones instead of flesh.

DRUSILLA was reproved, but reproved in vain; by all the servants; until her wild talk coming to the knowledge of Edward Denham, he put an entire stop to it, by protesting.

protesting that no one should be about Miss Paisley's person, who insulted the ashes of her deceased father.

ROSINA took this opportunity to visit the old toll-gate man and his wife; and, strange as it may seem, wept at the recollection of passed tranquility, though embittered by poverty; and unsheltered by friend-ship.

SHE thanked them in the most grateful terms for all their kindness; from her birth; to the discovery of her relations; for to you, my dear good people, said she, under Heaven, am I indebted for my present affluence, as well as my infant preservation; and to make the close of your lives happy, is, I shall ever believe, the most binding duty I have to perform.

THE contest between them ran high,—
the old people acquitting her of all tie, by
protesting

protesting they had no other motive for treating her as they had done, beyond pleasing themselves; and she insisting upon it, that her life would be too short to prove her gratitude. She made them many generous offers, from thinking them not so well off as they ought to be, but they modestly declined them all; until at length, the old man said they wished for some employment, to keep their minds awake, as exercise promoted health, and health was to them happiness.

ROSINA bade them speak the nature of their wishes, and assured them they should be complied with. Why then, my dear Young Lady, said the old man, my dame would be glad to busy herself amongst the poultry; and I to have a spot of ground to cultivate. But we were fearful of letting out a word of the matter, lest we should seem dissatisfied with the world of goodness already heaped on our heads.

*THEY

THEY were instantly put, by Rosina, (well knowing, she said, her uncle would highly approve of what she did,) into the situations they had described—with an earnest charge from the Young Lady to make no concealment, if any change of spot, or change of occupation would be agreeable to them. But, as the heart which knows no artificial wants is easily made happy, they continued delighted prosecutors of this, their chosen plan, to the end of their lives.

CHAPTER XVI.

A WEDDING AGREED UPON.

THE travellers at length returned, and Davison Hall became a scene of delight. The Major embraced, he even wept for joy, at receiving back his much loved niece, after all her perils. And Drusilla, following close behind her young Lady, dropped down upon one knee and kissed the Major's hand.

BRAVE, noble girl, he called her; (raising her up, whilst Rosina was embracing her other friends,) and how, said he, shall I reward your high services: you are too young for a husband; and if that was not the case, I know no man that deserves you.

I AM

I AM young indeed, your Honour, replied Drusilla, but as to the matter of deserving me, there is one honest, good-natured man, who, if he was willing to wait for me, your Honour, would unsay what you have just said.

BUT, Drusilla, returned the Major, do you consider, that whilst you are growing older, he will grow older also.

VERY well, your Honour, and why not, said Drusilla: he will be young enough for me ten years hence; for, live as long as he may, his goodness of heart will never grow old. And I shall always have such a dread, your Honour, of meeting with a deceiver like the wicked Mr. Levet, that I would rather take Joseph Holland, at ninety, than any fellow, of a suitable age to myself, ten years hence, in the whole kingdom.

VERY well, said the Major, and if you make

make yourself capable of being a good wife, you shall not want my recommendation, and a handsome provision into the bargain. But how say you, Holland, demanded the Major, who at that moment was bringing in a portmanteau; are you willing, like Jacob of old, to serve seven years for this young damsels, who has been declaring herself in your favour?

HOLLAND replied he would be happy so to do; for that he liked her lively temper and uncommon good heart, and knew not where to better himself.

WELL said also, cried the Major; you are not, Holland, four-and-twenty, and therefore there can be no great harm done if you was held down to the strictest letter of your engagement. But, as to make you both happy will always be my earnest wish, only let me know when you and Drusilla think it would be decent and reasonable for you to become man and wife, though a year

or two on this side the mark, and my consent and my good offices shall be yours.

AND how, Edward Denham, said the Major, (the bustle of congratulation being over) now that we are so far got in the chapter of matrimony, how stands the tender account between you and my niece; I am sure, if fairly examined, she is left far behind on the debtor side of the leaf. And, as I love to do justice upon every occasion, a balance, if you have no objection, shall be struck with all convenient speed, for I will not tolerate one fraudulent practice.

HEAVEN defend us! Sir, cried Edward, what a question! Me an objection! me, whose sentiments and state of mind you have been so long acquainted with!!

AND yet, said the Major, should it appear you have left your opportunities with the young madam unimproved, and are consequently unable to give in the state of her

her mind also, I shall want faith to believe you know what it is to be a lover.

UNDER any other predicament than imputed obligations, I could, replied Edward, have pleaded my own cause.

THEN your delicacy, cried the Major, has, it seems, got the better of your love. Very sentimental, Edward, but very unnatural conduct, take my word for it. What think you, Rosina?

IF I had not received a single service from Mr. Denham, Sir, replied Rosina, I will not, thus called upon, deny, he would have been the choice of my heart. And, that having such unreturnable benefits to thank him for, it will be the pride and pleasure of my life to prove I have gratitude even equal to his claims upon me; and I know he has so much affection for me, that he asks no other reward.

Now, Rosina, said the Major, joining their hands, I am convinced you have a noble soul, and an excellent understanding; for, with all the grace of modesty, and all the charms of ingenuousness, you have rendered your hand, to such a mind as Edward's, (by this acknowledgment) a more acceptable gift than your youth, your very tolerable person, and good fortune, could otherwise have made it. And moreover, my good girl, as I am certain you will prize the information, let me add, you have thereby fixed and insured your uncle's happiness; for the feelings that could dictate such a speech, must be strong and amiable in every interest and exercise thereof.

MR. DENHAM senior shook Major Jones by the hand; and Druilla, who had heard all, pulling Edward by the sleeve, said, is not every thing come to pass as foretold, your Honour, though your fears and your cares were so everlastingly disturbing

ing your peace, and tormenting me into the bargain.

JEMIMA and Rosina now retired; and the enraptured Drusilla ran to look for Mrs. Wellon, who happened to be absent at the adjusting of these important points, and was highly gratified by the kind girl's relation of what had passed. For I am sure, said Mrs. Wellon, some good ought to come out of the evil we have experienced, or it would be almost a mark of the Divine wrath, for the first time set up against the helpless and the innocent.

A COUNCIL was then held by the Major and his friends, respecting what was to be done with Levet.

I WOULD see him myself, said the Major, whatever violence I did my own feelings, and endeavour to convince him of the enormity of his guilt; but that I know he is incorrigible, and that though I should

be wounded, he would be unbefited. I could arrest him continued the Major, for large sums, both of Lord Paisley's and mine, which he has embezzled, and lay him by the heels for life, but I should dread the consequence of his iniquity even in that almost fangleſs ſituation; for, if he could meet with one virtue in any person's character he could get acceſs to, he would never reſt until it was extinguiſhed. I muſt therefore, ſaid the Major, conceive it a duty incumbent upon me, who know hiſ infernal-mindedneſs, to bind him hand and foot from doing miſchief. Could there-fore ſome one or other of my inferiortenants like to receive him into their house, to watch and restrain him at all points, as they would a madman or a lunatic, I would cheerfully pay an adequate ſtipend, and give the wretch a chance for repen-tance.

DAVISON and the two Denhams having no better plan to offer, and, with all their contempt and indignation for the man, not
wishing

wishing to check the effusions of the Major's humanity, it was determined that they should generally make it their immediate busines to find a place for him, such as was desired, because it was generally assented to that the sooner he was disposed of the better.

CHAPTER XVII.

A DECISION BY VOTES.

AND thus did Davison Hall once more wear the semblance of the golden age, when peace and plenty, and justice and virtue, and benevolence and truth, deigned to make this lower world their place of residence.

THEIR musical parties were revived, their parties at backgammon pursued with avidity; and Drusilla, having a wonderful talent both for singing and playing, contributed not a little to the universal satisfaction.

EDWARD DENHAM, however, took occasion one evening, in the midst of all their glee,

glee, to remind the Major of promises unperformed, and hopes deferred.

I WAITED but for you, frigid Sir, cried the Major, with your over-sized delicacy, to put us in motion; for though you have not troubled me, to do you justice, with solicitations, Rosina's eyes have reproached me every hour in the day for this week past, for not doing the honours of her modesty, and bringing the wedding forward.

THIS sally produced a hearty laugh, in which Rosina was so free from affectation as to join, it being clear to all the company, she was well aware, the Major did but jest.

AND so, continued the Major, when the laugh had subsided, that I may not deserve any future reproaches of equal severity with the past,—what say you, Edward Denham, — shall to-morrow be the happy day?

AM I to decide, replied Edward! — Ah Sir, how cruel this kindness.

JEMIMA, your vote, said the Major.

THIS day week, (seeing Rosina grow distressed) replied Jemima.

DAVISON, speak up my boy, said the Major, unawed by the browbeatings of any blushing she in the whole company.

I AM a mortal enemy to delay, replied Davison, and think the preparation always the worst part of any business. So I, Miss, Rosina, hold up both my hands for to-morrow.

AND I also, cried Mr. Denham senior.

AND now, said the Major, for the casting voice. My heart, my beloved Rosina, if you can unpained consent, requests you will let to-morrow be the day.

DRUSILLA

DRUSILLA left her harp, and knelt down in silence by her Young Lady. And Mrs. Wellon protested it moved her to tears, it was so touching a scene.

FAR then, let it be from me, said Rosina, to prove myself invulnerable. What request of your lips, my dearest uncle, my benefactor, my protector, could I refuse! Think then what reply I can cheerfully make to the declared request of your heart, To-morrow, Mr. Edward Denham, I will be yours.

GOOD, and generous as good, girl, cried the Major.

I vow, said Jemima, I was so cheaply won, in comparison with this divine damsel, that I begin to wish Davison and I had much rather followed, than set, the matrimonial example; that I might have known how to give myself proper consequence

I do not, said Davison, believe it possible you can have so much cruelty—or, I will even make bold to say, so much ingratitude, as to speak the truth on this occasion. For, though there are really some fine showy circumstances in Rosina's conduct, you may please to recollect I was a much more ardent lover than our great Mr. Edward, well as he may fancy he has obviated the charge the Major so properly brought against him, by the plea of superabundant delicacy.

I AM at a loss, cried the Major, which to admire most, Jemima's vanity or Davison's impudence. But Wellon, for I will wave all further comments, you have been present at the signing and sealing, and have only, therefore, to receive the short rule for the day. Let my table and cellars be open, that my family, and all my humble friends, may rejoice. I wish Jewel was here, to perform the ceremony; and his worthy wife, to share in our happiness. He shall not, however,

however, lose the nuptial fee: and it will not be long before we are all reunited. But mark me, Wellon, added the Major, we will have no spectators, except the present company, of our joy, to prophane its purity, or restrain our amicable conviviality. We are ourselves a multitude, and any addition would be to *leff*en our society.

IT was not easy to determine which was the most delighted person, the Major, Mrs. Wellon, or Drusilla; for the manners of the other personages were differently regulated, when the ceremony was over. Mrs. Wellon and Drusilla, adorned with white favours, begged permission to wait at the bridal table, unassisted by any one except Joseph Holland, who brought in the dinner, and lightened their fatigue in every possible circumstance: for he was tender and kind in his behaviour to Drusilla, and that was all the notice he either wished, or could with propriety take of her; and his

his respect for Mrs. Wellon was unquestioned.

WITH the dessert, quite unexpectedly, (by the Major's appointment) came in Rosina's old father and mother, who were received with the utmost kindness. I would not, said the Major, have forgot their interest in this business for a thousand pounds. And I hope they will live to enjoy many anniversaries of a day that gives to them a new friend and grateful patron, and to me a much esteemed near relation.

YOUR Honour, said Drusilla, to the Major, (for, in return for all her services, she was encouraged to say what she pleased, as she was known to be incapable of saying any thing unfit for the family to hear,) you have, an please your Honour, taken many an unpleasant journey: I cannot help, therefore, wishing you would reverse the medal, and make one pleasant one, into Wales;

Wales; that land of mountains, rivers, and harpers, without end or number.

If you can prevail upon your Lady, and the rest of the company, said the Major, I am perfectly disposed to comply with your wish. I owe my Welch tenants a visit; and the romantic mansion, as it has been described to me, will be trebly agreeable to us all, by Jewel's and his wife's being there to bid us welcome.

We have no will or inclination but yours, Sir, was the general voice; and it was resolved to make an excursion the following week.

But before the dessert was removed, Joseph Holland opened the door, and begged to speak a few words with Mr. Davison.

His countenance was not unobserved by Drusilla and Mrs. Wellon, who instantly became so curious to know his business, that

that they suddenly withdrew, without one consideration of the conjectures or alarms their conduct might give rise to.

THEY found Davison, with a face of horror, listening to a tale, which Joseph Holland, pale as a ghost, was relating.

WHAT has happened; (pardon, Sir, said they to Mr. Davison, both in a breath) we earnestly entreat to know what has happened.

LEVET, replied Davison, is dying! —

By his own hand! cried Mrs. Wellon, I am certain; for a natural death, however awful, could not produce such consternation and dismay.

You have grieved too truly, said Davison; (for Joseph Holland did not presume to speak, for fear of speaking wrong,) but, good Mrs. Wellon, and dear Drusilla, you must

must not cloud this day by your distressed looks. He is, to tell you the whole truth, out of his misery ; and let that information sooth your humanity, and render you collected, calm, and as you should be.

DAVISON rejoined the company, with what, as he persuaded himself, an air of cheerfulness ; but Mrs. Davison was not to be deceived. Some misfortune, said she, has happened. O ! Rosina, that so white a day as this could not pass unstained by calamity !

I WISH the people had kept their news to themselves, said Davison, as nothing could be done for a wretch that was senseless and departing. But they acted to the best of their judgment, and I am wrong to condemn them.

BUT what, what has happened, asked Rosina, Jemima, all present.

Look

LOOK round, said Davison, are we not all safe? What distress ought then to reach us?

WE will know, they all exclaimed; we will know, Davison.

WHY then, replied Davison, some officious person having told Levet of our happiness, happiness beyond his power to destroy, he has chose your wedding day, Rosina, for his day of self-execution, and has cut his throat with a razor.

EVERY body was shocked, yet every body resolved his malice should be defeated; for there was no doubt but the interruption of their felicity was his incitement to this dire act of precipitating himself into the presence of an offended deity, and that their innocent mirth should be kept up. But their efforts were vain: it was, you look grave, Davison; and you sigh, Jemima; and the Major is quite an altered man; insomuch,

somuch, that they were obliged at last to give nature her bent, and change their awkward attempts to be cheerful into serious and moral reflections.

ALAS! said the Major, how large a portion has this miserable man, in repeated instances, been permitted to rob us (all innocent as we are of offence to him) of our social comforts, our fire-side enjoyments. Innocent of offence did I say! nay, his outrages on our peace were actually committing in the moment we were endeavouring to serve him, without letting him perceive the source from whence his benefits flowed. — But let us not imagine, continued he, that these interruptions and derangements have not had some wise and merciful end to answer towards us; for, at least, they have kept us steady in our wishes and attention to lead the life of duty as we have gone along, and to point out to us the quicksands

quicksands by which the best-meaning people may be surrounded.

NOT to be prepared, continued the Major, (no one offering to speak) to exchange time for eternity, is the next thing to being unfit equally to live and die; miracles are not required from frail mortality; to be well-intending is to be well-meriting, and constitutes us what is called virtuous and upright individuals.

FOR my part, said Drusilla wiping her eyes, I think there is comfort in every misfortune; it is true, Mr. Levet will have a frightful account to settle, but we all of us, from the highest to the lowest, are delivered from a baneful enemy, and I only wonder he did not cut my throat, or Mrs. Wellon's throat, or your honour's throat, said she to Major Jones, instead of his own; for then, his vile and wicked purpose of making this day a day of woe, would have been answered,

answered, and he would have died the death I do think he was born for, (saving all your presences) and that is being hanged.

IT seems, a stout resolute fellow, who occupied a small farm of the Major's, on the double motives of obliging his landlord and improving his own income, had undertaken the care of Levet; and so faithfully and diligently had he executed his undertaking, that either himself, or a man he could rely upon, never lost sight of him from morning till night; and to this situation, this man of intrigue and extensive enterprise, was compelled to conform.

HE was sensible how much he was in Major Jones' power, as also of his lenient exertion of it; but, as to be separated from the commission of vice, and the association with vicious company, was to him equal to

to the separation of soul and body, he, it is supposed, soothed the gloomy habit (soon contracted) by meditating self-murder, long before the time of his nerving his arm against his own existence, or when and where the dreadful catastrophe should be performed, was fixed upon by him.

THE news of Rosina's wedding with Edward Denham was brought to the farm. He listened and appeared struck; but, throwing off his chagrin in a few moments, and, according to his wonted custom when he had any point to carry, deceived the farmer into an opinion he remembered it no more.

THE farmer could not be satisfied, without paying his respects, though for a quarter of an hour only, at the Hall. One toast led the way to another, until he felt himself wholly disinclined to depart; and wherefore should he depart, when, as his mind

mind told him, he had left Levet in trusty hands; and it was a hard thing indeed, if he must keep a dog, and yet be always forced to bark himself.

LEVET, discovering the farmer was gone out, had no doubt of the motives of his absence. He began to walk about, the man said, in great agitation; asked for some ale, some bread and cheese, some milk; and the man being obliged to go into the dairy for the latter, gave the wretched self-destroyer the time he hoped for. He had fallen upon the arm of his chair when the man returned, and was weltering in his blood.

THE terrified country man raised him in his arms, and, being a tolerable horse-doctor, would have sewed up the wound; but Levet resisted his endeavours with all his might, rolled his eyes around in baleful despair, put his fingers into the wound for the evident purpose of enlarging it, and expired in great agonies.

HE

HE was put into the ground at midnight, the Coroners having brought in their verdict wilful murder, though the farmer, supported by his man's testimony, insisted upon it he was in a state of insanity ; and although he deserved (by those who could forbear to execrate his memory) to be remembered no more, he nevertheless was entitled to Christian burial.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CONCLUSION.

HIS shocking event hastened their departure from the Hall, and the Major promised himself, (so elastic is hope) he should recover his cheerfulness in Wales.

MRS. WELLON said it was the luckiest thing in the world, that this was her master's first visit to his estate, because, where the scene was new, there must be amusement; and amusement, in her simple judgment, was a species of happiness: and she only wished Levet's name might never be mentioned to conjure up doleful recollections; though, if the truth might be told, she saw him every night in her dreams, with his eyes staring, and his throat streaming,

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she

she knew not when she should be able to forget him.

NOT so Drusilla, her young and lively imagination had already shaken off every gloomy retrospect, except when she passed the church yard, when she thought, she said, how she should feel if his apparition was to meet her eyes.

DENHAM and his wife had their minds much relieved by knowing all possibility of his annoying them was at an end; for so convinced were they of his active and diabolical spirit, that they did believe he could never cease plotting mischief, like the grand enemy of mankind, whilst life remained.

THE Major, perceiving the old man and woman drooped at the thoughts of losing Rosina, lest they should, they said, never see her more, declared he would multiply

multiply his party to the complement of an Eastern caravan company, rather than leave one aching heart behind him.

IT was accordingly appointed by the most humane of men, that himself and Mr. Denham senior should go in his own post chaise; the married Ladies and their husbands in a coach and four; Mrs. Wellon, Drusilla, and the old toll-gate couple in a dilly; and that Joseph Holland should attend them, with the other servants, on horseback.

THIS arrangement had the desired effect, and every set of company had their favourite subjects of conversation. And Drusilla, it being the first time she could uninterruptedly relate all her adventures in France, or Mrs. Wellon give her the sum total of those in which she had, on Madam Rosina's account, been involved, this worthy and humble *partie-quarrée* were highly entertained.

AFTER finishing which, Drusilla besought the old woman would tell them the whole story of Lady Paisley's coming a poor wanderer to her house, the birth of her child, and every consequential article; and it was proposed by Mrs. Wellon that Joseph Holland should be allowed his share of entertainment. I will therefore, said she, for what does he not deserve from us all, invite him into the coach: we shall be only a little crowded or so for a few miles, and one of the footmen will take care of his horse, for I know he will be much pleased with so marvellous a tale.

HOLLAND, as Mrs. Wellon had foretold he would, professed himself highly indebted to her goodness, and joyfully accepted her kind proposal.

WE are all links, said the good-natured and generous Wellon, of the same chain, and

and no distinctions ought to subsist where the claim is unable to be decided which of us is entitled to the first rank, for heart-felt wishes to render ourselves serviceable to the most amiable and most grateful family in the universe.

THE prospects were delightful so soon as they entered this fertile principality; and the neatness of the Welch cottages, with the plenty and peace which seems every where apparent, filled the mind with pleasing sensations.

THESE people, cried the Major, saluting his young friends from the chaise, understand the art, you find, of being happy, and let us purchase their receipt, if within our abilities to purchase it. Though I think it is discoverable, continued the Major, if we will only take the trouble to analyze, that their being so far removed from the pernicious influence of the great, and their

having so much common sense amongst them as to keep vanity and ambition at a distance from their dwellings, (if we except their little harmless pride of pedigree) is what constitutes them the happy people we behold them, and points out to us the turnpike road for following their steps, and of course being as happy as themselves..

IT must be needless to add the pleasure with which they were received by Mr. and Mrs. Jewel; and the Major told this truly worthy clergyman, that it was, perhaps, lucky for them both, that he was engaged to Miss Vincent before he, the Major, saw her, as he verily believed her great and obvious merits would have made a fool of him in his old age, and perhaps have induced the lady to be guilty of an act that must have impeached her fine understanding; being flattered by his friends that he stood

stood high in her favour, which was sufficient for him to conclude, though no fop, that by proper assiduity and fair manœuvrings, he might have won her heart.

THE END,

an old man who had a very bad
habit of smoking and was very ill
for a long time. He was a
very poor man and had no money.

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Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
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Has lost that concord of harmonious pow'rs
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Is off the pause within. The passions all
Have burst their bounds.
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